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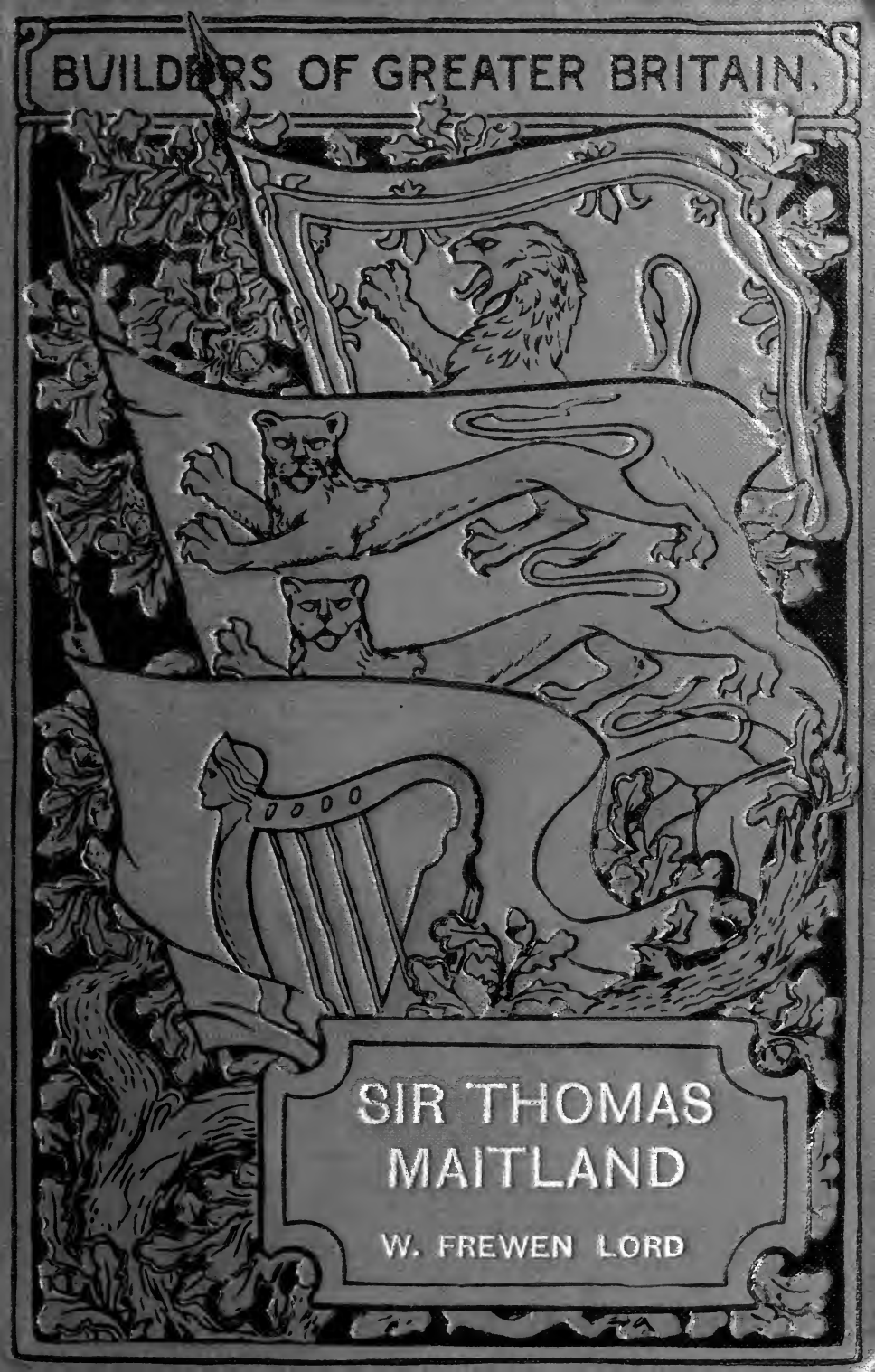

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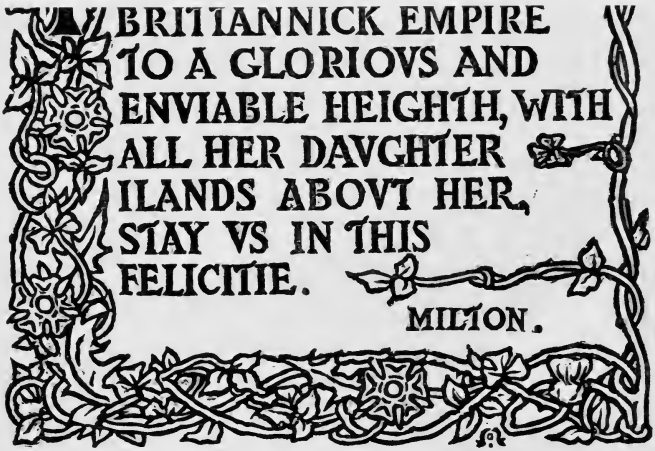

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BUILDERS OF GREATER BRITAIN

EDITED BY H. F. WILSON, M.A.

Barrister-at-Law

Late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge

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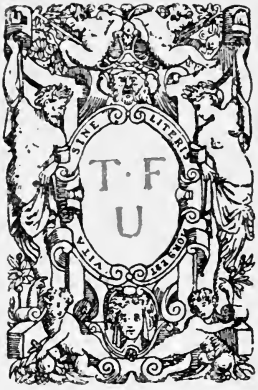
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LIEUTENANT GENERAL THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR THOMAS MAITLAND.

SIR THOMAS MAITLAND

THE MASTERY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

BY

WALTER FREWEN LORD

AUTHOR OF
THE LOST POSSESSIONS OF ENGLAND
AND
THE LOST EMPIRES OF THE MODERN WORLD

With Photogravure Frontispiece and Maps

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PREFACE

In this volume it is not proposed to narrate the emotions of the Countess of Lauderdale on receiving her son's first letter from school. Nor shall we be concerned with the good advice given to Thomas Maitland on entering the army. We shall not occupy ourselves with Thomas Maitland's favourite books or pastimes, or with his spiritual difficulties (if he had any), or with his social successes and embarrassments.

The boyhood and youth of great men is a subject over which much time has been spent. One would not say that the time was wasted; for the results of so much labour form a perennial source of consolation for parents. If a boy is dull, they can always recall Clive the scapegrace, Lawrence the dunce, and that very stupid and awkward young man

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Arthur Wellesley. If a boy is good at his books they may remember the scholarly Warren Hastings, the brilliant Dupleix, the exceptionally astute Napoleon Buonaparte.

But the very results that offer so much consolation to parents are, from their varied nature, a source of perplexity to historians and historical students. If any general conclusion can be drawn from so much conflicting evidence, it would appear to be this: that if a man has sufficient vital force to assimilate and carry with him through life that immense mass of useless information which is known as the education of a gentleman, his education will perhaps make him a more agreeable companion for a journey, or a more brilliant after-dinner speaker than his unlettered fellow; but it will not help him to succeed in life. He will succeed in spite of his learning, and not in consequence of it. Too many dull and ignorant men have succeeded for this position to be impugned; too many highly trained and brilliant men have failed. Having wasted their force in book-learning, they have not vitality enough to face successfully the hard work of the education of life; and they sink, like

Barbarossa, in the flood, brilliantly apparelled but drowned by the tide.

We have, then, to remark that Maitland, when he commenced his career as a colonial administrator, started with this double advantage, that he was born in the purple and that he was a totally uneducated man. The eccentric scribble that he dignified by the name of his handwriting is not the handiwork of one who thinks himself too grand to write distinctly (according to the foolish sneer, which once had a vogue, that the aristocracy are all uneducated); it is the handiwork of a man who does not know how to write. His signature reads just as well upside down as not. During an age when classical quotations were the only recognised mark of an educated gentleman, Maitland, throughout a long Parliamentary career, and in the course of an official correspondence almost unparalleled for its voluminousness, never once broke out into Latin. He once quoted Swift in the House of Commons; he once referred the Secretary of State to Adam Smith. These were the authors who recommended themselves to his intelligence. Himself a man capable of any quantity of hard work, provided

that there was human interest in it, he could appreciate (although he did not agree with) Adam Smith. The masculine common sense of Swift, his savage satire and his consummate knowledge of mankind, appealed to one whose lifelong study was man, and who brought to that pursuit a savage and domineering temper.

Throughout an official career of twenty-seven years his labours were Herculean, and he had no intervals of learned leisure. He was quite incapable of turning good English into indifferent Latin, or of discovering new species of plants or animals, or of tracing curves to banish *ennui*, or of writing treatises on the Apostolical Succession. Life to Maitland meant work; work that it would have crushed ordinary men even to attempt. His diversion, his solace, was gross indulgence. He was not a brilliant or a popular man. He was a great human force controlled and driven by a will of iron. Principles he abhorred; they were to him as a red rag to a bull. 'Detestable principles' or 'ridiculous principles,' he sometimes writes of, but never of principles that deserve respect. But we must not allow ourselves to be led away into the common and

totally erroneous view of Maitland's character which condemns him as a gross and brutal tyrant. His life was illuminated and dignified by his unbending devotion to duty. One principle there was to which Maitland owed and rendered the loftiest reverence—the reverence of a life's devotion. It was, in the stately language of the Prayer Book, 'The safety, honour and welfare of His Majesty and his dominions.'

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NOTE.—* *The Editor desires to express his acknowledgments to the Earl of Lauderdale (the owner of the original picture) and Sir Arthur Lyon Fremantle (the Governor of Malta), for their assistance in connection with this portrait.*

Sir Thomas Maitland

CHAPTER I

DESCENT—THE LAW—THE ARMY—INDIA—MAITLAND THE LITTLE ENGLANDER

THE Maitland clan is one of the oldest and sturdiest of the stubborn stock of Scotch nobility. They were of Norman descent, and did not become distinctively Scottish until the fourteenth century. From the first they were fighters, remarkable even among Border nobles for vigour, and still more for craft. Although they were always conspicuous figures in the fighting services, yet, even in the days when every man must be a soldier, it was more in the active conduct of public affairs than in battle that the Maitlands excelled. They were ever busy, active public men, with their full share of the unscrupulousness of their age and a considerable gift of successful intrigue. After the family had remained for four hundred years of simple knightly rank, their chief was in the sixteenth century raised to the peerage; and in the year 1624, was advanced to the dignity of an Earldom by the title

of Earl of Lauderdale. The second Earl was the Minister of Charles II.; and of all the Lauderdales, is perhaps the one whose name is best known to students of English History. The initial letter of his title formed the last letter of the famous 'Cabal.'

In John, second Earl and first and only Duke of Lauderdale, the Maitland characteristics found their completest development. He plunged into public affairs with all the ardour of a man pursuing a favourite sport. Public life was as the breath of his nostrils. He brought to it immense personal vigour, considerable suppleness in recommending himself to his Sovereign, and a powerful mind destitute of scruples. He looked very closely after his own interests, and obtained the Dukedom of Lauderdale and the Marquisate of March. His carelessness of others earned for him the reputation of 'the wicked Duke,' and he lived riotously and somewhat brutally a very full and active life of sixty-six years. His two principal titles died with him, but his brother succeeded to the Earldom. He possessed but little of the Duke's capacity, but all of his violence and assertiveness; and he got himself into many awkward places. His son Richard did even worse: floundered in the dangerous mire of Jacobite politics, was proscribed and exiled, and died at Paris out of favour with both William and James II. The fifth Earl, Richard's brother, warned perhaps by his predecessor's mistakes, accepted the Revolution, and accepted also

the secondary position to which the violence and blunders of his kinsmen had reduced the once mighty house of Maitland. He lived quietly, and his son, the sixth Earl, was quite inconspicuous.

But with the marriage of the seventh Earl a new strain entered the Maitland stock. The days of that wild statesmanship which we may almost without exaggeration call predatory politics; the days when a Maitland, bringing with him all the daring and reckless acquisitiveness of the Border noble, could enter upon the business of state as a gamester, and make the most for himself out of the scramble—these days were fast passing away. The blindness with which the third, fourth and fifth Earls had continued to gamble with public life, while soberer men accepted the altered conditions of the nation and were profiting by them, had reduced the Earldom of Lauderdale to the position of a comparatively insignificant Scotch peerage.

The marriage of the seventh Earl altered that state of things. James, Earl of Lauderdale, may be said to have married beneath him. Instead of selecting for his wife a Seton, a Murray or a Gordon, he espoused Mary, daughter of Alderman Sir Thomas Lombe, and grand-daughter of a weaver, a native of Norwich. The Alderman, her father, had accumulated a fortune—no very great fortune as men count fortunes to-day, but something for the eighteenth century—£120,000. The Countess of Lauderdale's share of this was one-half: but it was not so much the modest sum of £60,000

that served the Maitlands, as the mingling of their lawless blood with the sober and thrifty strain of the old worsted-weaver of Norwich.

Not that any great difference was apparent in the eighth Earl. He was a true Maitland of the old type; ever to the fore in public life, quarrelsome, defiant, unscrupulous. From a violent Whig he became, in late life, a violent Tory; but he regained the old Maitland trick of improving his fortunes, and if he took an unprofitable side from a mistaken estimate as to which was the winning cause, he at any rate mastered the rules of public life, and showed considerable talent in availing himself of them. He very nearly succeeded in getting himself made Governor-General of India.

It was in Thomas, the second son of the seventh Earl, the subject of this biography, that the daring and craft of the Maitlands showed itself so happily blended with the patience, the conciliatory temper, and the habit of compromise which go to make the successful man of business; qualities that he may very well have inherited from the Alderman's daughter.

The reading of Maitland's character in the light of his family history is by no means unprofitable. The ease with which, from the outset of his public career, he rose to every situation, however complicated, was derived from twenty generations of ancestors accustomed to public life. The savage glee with which he fell on and exterminated an enemy, when he could

safely indulge his passion for a rousing quarrel, no less than the caution which impelled him to bear any affront with saintly meekness so long as it was unsafe to resent it, may all be traced to the instinct of centuries of Border strife. To the same source we may safely ascribe the amazing assurance with which he frequently announced to the Secretary of State that he was about to disobey orders. A long line of Maitlands accustomed to be a law unto themselves had issued in an *enfant terrible* of the service. But the service never lost by his disobedience. No Secretary ever crossed him without injuring the public interests; for Maitland's sagacity was infallible. In later life his manners were atrocious; even Bathurst deplored them. But here ends the tale of whatever qualities, good or bad, he may have inherited from his father's ancestry. He was the first and perhaps the only Maitland who was a sound financier. Dearly he loved to balance his budget; dearly he loved to roll up a surplus. In the public service he was not only careful, he was miserly. In private life he lived lavishly, as his forbears had done who had always commanded money without stint, either from raiding, or from illustrious alliances, or from predatory excursions on the public treasury. But here, again, the habits of the great noble were corrected by the thriftiness of the weaver of Norwich. Though lavish, Maitland was not extravagant. Amid the howls of abuse that were heard whenever Maitland's name was

mentioned, we discern no hint of dissatisfaction either at his public or private expenditure. He was accused of every fault of which a public man could be guilty, and of every private failing except parsimony. Spite is always blind, so we should expect this to be the very fault that he was inclined to; but it was not so. At the time of his death, he was in treaty for the purchase of No. 7 New Burlington Street—not a very palatial or fashionable residence. His will was proved under £30,000. It was re-sworn two years later under £40,000, either in consequence of some legacies falling in, or in consequence of a sudden rise in the value of property owing to the rapid industrial development that was, at that time, taking place all over England.

At the time of Maitland's death, however, all that he had to live upon was his pension, and the interest on £30,000. If we say £4000 a year altogether, we shall be near the mark. This is not an unbecoming provision for a man of his rank; but it is nothing to the sum that he might have laid by with parsimony out of the very large income of £13,000 a year that he had enjoyed for the last eleven years of his life.

Such, as far as birth and descent can define a man, was Thomas Maitland; a man who, more than most, must be judged, if he is to be judged fairly, by his work; for the work was the man.

The place and date of his birth are uncertain. His elder brother, afterwards the eighth Earl of Lauder-

dale, was born in the month of January 1759 at the family seat, Hatton House, Ratho, Midlothian. Thomas Maitland's birth is usually assigned to the winter of the same year. Thus he was one year younger than Nelson, and ten years older than Napoleon and Wellington. Probably he was born at Ratho, like his elder brother.

The second son of the seventh Earl of Lauderdale, Thomas Maitland was destined for the Bar, and was entered at Lincoln's Inn on the 14th of May 1774. Recognised authority says that he entered the House of Commons in the same year as member for the Haddingtonshire Burghs. But inasmuch as he was only fifteen years old at the time, we may be permitted for once to question recognised authority. The law did not attract him; and when in 1778 the Seaforth Highlanders were raised, he obtained a commission. The regiment was sent to the Channel Islands; and in these agreeable quarters Maitland spent the years from 1778 to 1781. In June of the latter year the Seaforth Highlanders sailed from Plymouth to the East Indies, and arrived at Madras in April 1782.

If life in the Channel Islands had been pleasantly monotonous, life in the East Indies was desperately exciting; and if Maitland had had that blood in him that makes the great soldier, assuredly he would never have turned his back on the service. While at home he must have chafed beyond endurance at the disasters

our arms were yearly suffering in North America. In India he arrived at the moment when the English cause seemed lost for ever; for he landed in the middle of the famous naval duel between Hughes and Suffren. It was to sheer good fortune only that England was indebted on this occasion for the preservation of her Eastern Empire. Here was food for reflection; food of the most stimulating kind for the man who is to develop into the great commander. Maitland saw a little active service, and made good use of his time, as he afterwards showed when addressing the House of Commons on Indian affairs; but he had not found his true sphere of action. Nothing that the army had to offer was beyond his reach; for he was much employed at headquarters, and patronised by Lord Cornwallis. But the army did not attract him. He seems to have tired of it, as he tired of the Bar; and at the end of the year 1790 he returned to England with the rank of Major, and entered Parliament as member for the Haddington Burghs.

At the age of thirty-two he commenced his third career. Conscious of abilities far above the average, he must yet have had to confess that after seventeen years of endeavour he was still, in effect, a failure. He set to work with the bitter energy of a man who is disappointed, but not quite beaten yet, and soon made himself felt with a vengeance. On the 28th of February 1791 he delivered his maiden speech: it was on the occasion of the war with Tippoo Sahib. It

was at once plain that he would make a conspicuous parliamentary figure, but of what kind was not clear until he had sat down : after that there was no longer a doubt. He was what we now call a Little Englander, and one of the earliest of parliamentary obstructionists.

In the course of his speech he violently attacked the policy of the war. It had been said that Tippoo was a 'usurper.' But who were we to talk about 'usurpers'? we were usurpers ourselves. From every point of view he condemned the war ; and later on in his speech he lectured the House on the real nature of virtue. 'Goodness,' he said, 'is not an inert or speculative quality, but consists in exertion for the benefit and happiness of mankind.' On this laudable sentiment he contrived to found a spiteful and abusive assault on Warren Hastings, of all people. He was called to order by the Speaker. This was a most unexpected attitude for the future empire-maker to assume ; and he was naturally welcomed with rapture by the Little Englanders of the day. He had a fine presence, an easy flow of good language, and undaunted courage. From the assurance with which he prostituted his great local knowledge by talking what he must have known to be nonsense, and dangerous nonsense, it was clear that he had no scruples ; and he readily mastered the forms of the House.

Thoroughness was the dominant note of Maitland's character. As a Great Englander no man was greater ;

as a Little Englander no man was more petty. Later in life, when face to face with real difficulties, his sagacity was never at fault. Often he was rude, not infrequently insubordinate: but never wrong. In Parliament, and while the attitude that he had taken up demanded that he should talk nonsense, no man talked greater nonsense than Maitland, or talked more of it or with a more convincing air. He now allied himself with the Whitbreads and the Sawbridges and the Greys, and particularly distinguished himself in the Oczakoff debate on the 12th of April 1791. The debate was on an early stage of the then nascent Eastern question, and the problem was whether England was to support her representations by a show of armed force. Maitland was, of course, opposed to anything in the nature of an armed manifestation, and stoutly declared that he would be no party to bullying Russia. Bullying Russia! One wonders how he contrived to talk such astounding rubbish with a grave face; and how he had managed to stifle his sense of humour. He wound up by declaring that not even for Constantinople itself should we be justified in going to war with Russia. Perhaps not: there are many who agree with Maitland; but the Eastern question is not one to be so easily settled as that, and has troubled the sleep of a century of statesmen since he settled it so completely to his own satisfaction.

Early in the year 1792, on the Address of Thanks for the speech from the throne, there was a compli-

mentary reference to the Indian army, and Maitland would have none of it. He stoutly defended Tippoo Sahib. That much-injured Prince had been grossly oppressed by tyrannical England: his only crime was that he was a man of great abilities. Here Maitland showed himself more Royalist than the King; for all native authorities agree that if Haidar was born to found an Empire, Tippoo was born to lose it:—if not to England then to some other enemy.

Maitland was one of the most prominent of the 'Friends of the People': others were Charles Grey, Alderman Sawbridge, Samuel Whitbread and R. B. Sheridan. On the 26th of April 1792, the Committee met at the Freemasons' Tavern and drew up their demand for Parliamentary Reform, followed by an address to the people of Great Britain. Two peers only signed: Lauderdale, Maitland's brother, and Kinnaird. They were now sailing very near the wind, and the next month a proclamation was issued against seditious writings. Maitland, who was afraid of nobody, openly declared from his place in Parliament that the proclamation was intended to stir up discord and blast the cause of Parliamentary Reform. The proclamation was followed up by Dundas's Alien Bill, requiring all immigrants to give an account of themselves. The French Revolution was at its height, and 'Revolutionary Principles' (of which, throughout his official career, Maitland always showed a proper horror) were a bugbear to most

Englishmen. But Maitland championed the Revolution, and would not allow that the unrestricted ingress of aliens—or 'foreign emissaries' as they were called—was any danger to the kingdom.

A month later he made an appeal to the House to abridge the trial of Warren Hastings. This ill-used man, he said, had returned from India six years before in such a state of health that no one would have given him six years to live. He had not only lived six years, but had endured throughout the whole of that time the most cruel persecution. Such oppression was a reflection on our national system of justice, and called for the attention of the House.

This is, indeed, a surprising speech from the Maitland who was called to order in his maiden speech for a most indecent attack on the man whose cause he was now championing.

A fortnight later, on the 22d of February 1793, he supported the motion forbidding the construction of barracks. This appears to be a harmless, and even a useful way of spending public money. Since we must have an army, it is surely no more than our duty to make our men comfortable. But Maitland did not take that view. Never was he in finer form. To build barracks, he urged, would be to overthrow the British Constitution. It appeared that our Home army had reached the alarming total of 18,000 men. Naturally, the 18,000,000 of our civilian population would be at the mercy of such a band of Præ-

torians. As it was, we were only saved from a military despotism by the half-civilian character of the soldiers. Once herd them together in barracks, and our liberties were gone for ever. He returned to the subject next year in the debate on the Army Estimates, by which time the barracks had been built at the cost of £100,000. This shocking waste of public money was not only unnecessary, but clearly unconstitutional. As the question was settled, however, he proceeded to attack the policy of employing foreigners in places of trust. Maitland, who had shown such touching confidence in immigrants from a land at war with us, was horrified at the idea of trusting an ally. Why! he exclaimed, if this kind of conduct were persisted in, we might actually see a Hessian in command at Portsmouth! Britannia, as Maitland imagined her at this epoch, was a most hysterical female. She must not take steps to defend herself against her enemies, for that would be showing suspicion, which would be unkind. She dares not trust her allies; she is frightened of her own soldiers.

He was now absorbed in one of the most pernicious occupations that a Member of Parliament can indulge in, a violent diatribe against our foreign policy—on this occasion our Mediterranean policy. Of course the foreign policy of the country is, within certain usually admitted limits, a proper subject for discussion; but Maitland's attack was hardly more than indiscriminate abuse. It was dangerous, however, because

he was a soldier, and a soldier of experience. It was this attitude, persisted in by Maitland's party long after Maitland deserted it, that perpetually misled Napoleon as to the stability of England's policy in after years.

The particular incidents that excited Maitland's anger were the Toulon Expedition and the occupation of Corsica. These now half-forgotten episodes in the great drama of the French Revolution brought us considerable discomfiture: and yet they were, at the time, wise moves. The capture of Toulon was intended to give a rallying point for the Royalist party in France. But the Royalist feeling did not underlie the whole country; it lay in patches, and the Revolutionary party, moving on inner lines, was able to attack the Royalists in detail and subdue them. The English were in this way driven out of Toulon; but there was no cause for bemoaning our failure, for success had never been anticipated except from the co-operation of the French. The occupation of Corsica certainly had an unfortunate ending; but it was a good move strategically, and gave us the complete control (if we had employed an Admiral capable of seizing the opportunity) of the politics of Italy. We lost our chance owing to the incapacity of Admiral Hotham; but the chance was there, and the episodes of the conquest of Corsica were brilliant and highly creditable to the navy.

Maitland's attitude throughout was little short of

scandalous, but it was partly redeemed by its absurdity. What did it signify, he angrily inquired, if the French navy were paralysed by our occupation of Toulon? Nobody could call the destruction of the enemy's fleet a military advantage. Besides, the whole expedition was a monument of corruption and incapacity. He violently abused Lord Hood, a most gallant old sailor, who was half killing himself with overwork. He ridiculed the idea of capturing Corsica with only 1400 soldiers. As a matter of fact, the island was captured without any soldiers at all, and by the almost unsupported efforts of the navy. It is difficult to say which of the two cuts the more pitiful figure—Maitland in Parliament denouncing the attempt to capture Corsica, or General Dundas in Corsica refusing to make the attempt. On the motion to inquire into Hood's 'failure' at Toulon, 35 members supported Maitland, and 168 voted against him. Samuel Whitbread told with Maitland.

One would think that the Corsican debate was enough of mischievous folly for one session, but this extraordinary man, who was miserable unless furiously active, found an occasion, only four days after the last division, to outdo all his previous performances.

On the 14th of April 1794, it was moved that the House go into committee on the Bill to permit the enlistment of Frenchmen who had fled their own country, and to authorise the granting of commissions to them. Alien immigrants are not, as a rule, the

best stuff out of which to make soldiers or leaders of soldiers. But we must recall the times. The French Revolution was at its height, and the emigrants from France were almost without exception men of position, while many of them, of course, were nobles. Maitland's ravings on the occasion of the Bill to permit their enlistment had a real basis in his own constitutional antipathy to 'foreigners.' This antipathy burst out a quarter of a century later in his persecution of De Bosset—for which he had to pay dearly. But on the occasion of the Bill of 1794, he became almost hysterical. Let the House consider, he urged, that any Frenchman taken in arms against his country would certainly be hanged; the King's commission would avail him nothing. From hanging French prisoners it was but a step to hanging English prisoners; of course we should be goaded into retaliation, and then what frightful passions would be unchained. The Bill, he declared, militated against Magna Carta, against the Bill of Rights, and against the Act of Succession. As Maitland did not specify the Ten Commandments, we must infer that he did not think that the Bill actually infringed the Decalogue.

Speeches like this lose nine-tenths of their effect if unsupported by an enterprising press and a good system of sensational reporting. There is no use in addressing gallery speeches to hard-headed city men and shrewd old country squires. They are perfectly

capable of distinguishing sense from nonsense ; it is the idle or hurried readers of next morning who admire tirades of this kind, who are influenced by them, and who make the sensation-monger's public. This public was totally lacking to Maitland ; for complete parliamentary success he was born a century too soon.

However, he made one final demonstration before he abandoned the part of agitator. The ministry determined to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act for the purpose of dealing with secret societies and the propaganda of treasonable and revolutionary literature. Naturally the measure was liberally denounced : it was a subversion of our liberties, it was an attempt to introduce *lettres de cachet*, it was an odious piece of despotism. At half past three in the morning of the 16th of May 1794, the Bill passed first and second readings and committee after eleven obstructive divisions, in four of which Maitland was teller, and in which he was left in minorities declining from 39 in a house of 240, to 13 in a house of 121. Third reading was fixed for three o'clock on the next day, Saturday, and the Bill was passed at three o'clock on Sunday morning after a twelve hours' debate.

CHAPTER II

HIS CONVERSION AND ACTIVE PARLIAMENTARY CAREER TO ITS CLOSE

MAITLAND never appeared again as an obstructionist, or a Little Englander. He gradually withdrew from the debates, and at the end of 1797 obtained the San Domingo command. In that year he entered on his twenty-seven years of public service, and though he was often in Parliament, he rarely spoke, and always as an Imperialist. Although we shall be dealing with some events out of their due place, it will be convenient to finish our examination of Maitland's parliamentary career at once. Before we enter on this examination, however, there is a question (which every student of Maitland's life will ask himself) that we must inevitably spend some time in considering. The question, of course, is how to account for this sudden and complete abandonment of a cause in which he had shown so much fervour.

The type of man who agitates until he is bought, is a very familiar and a very commonplace type. Is this all that Maitland was? The facts would appear, at

any rate superficially, to go to show that this is really all that there was in Maitland. After six years of totally unscrupulous parliamentary agitation he got what he wanted: so will say his enemies. But when we say 'totally' unscrupulous, we must admit some reserves. In Parliament, it is true, he did not hesitate to take any step, however absurd and undignified, which brought him into notice. But he lacked the full measure of the demagogue's spirit, in that he would not go on the streets. He did not hobnob in city coffee-houses like Popham, or allow himself the licence of Wilkes. Here then are 'pointers' which, in the absence of documents, may help us to realise what Maitland's nature was. He had a great sense of the dignity of the service; and he had intense family pride. These are decided drawbacks to a man who proposes to embrace the career of a demagogue—supposing that to have been Maitland's object. But the way in which he entered on his duties as a colonial administrator show almost conclusively that Maitland was a different stamp of man altogether from the man who agitates in order that he may be bought. Such a creature almost invariably rests content with his 'job' when once it is secured. He does not earn the respect of his new employers; still less is he ever in the position to master them. He is bought, and there is an end of him. Nor, while he lives, is he given, as a rule, to overworking himself.

When we consider the way in which Maitland

devoted himself to his country's service, the mountains of difficulties that he overcame, and the extent to which he was leant on and trusted by the Home Government, we can no longer regard him as an agitator bought and paid for. So we come back to the original question of how we are to explain the egregious parliamentary exhibition of the years 1790-1794.

In the absence of documents (an absence which will probably be permanent, for Maitland was a careful man), we must come to a conclusion something like the following. It was not with any definite idea of earning an appointment that Maitland set out to make himself a parliamentary nuisance. He entered the House of Commons with the experimental views of life that a man is apt to cherish who has thought and acted much, yet without effect; who with infinite labour has yet achieved nothing. Since all was uncertain in this life of chances, he took the first chance that came—the parliamentary opening. He had seen but little of London since he was quite a young man, and he probably overrated the attractions of a parliamentary career. A success he had certainly attained; but after the debate on the Habeas Corpus Act, he must have asked himself whether such a success was not, in effect, the worst of failures. His reward when it came was not of those for which men sell themselves—for San Domingo was far indeed from being a bed of roses. Even San Domingo was not offered him until November 1797; so it can hardly

be said to have been offered with that promptitude that would justify us in calling it a bribe. On the whole, we must conclude that Maitland's early parliamentary career is to be looked on rather as a young man's mistake or a young man's extravagance, than a serious step taken with serious views.

We do not get a glimpse of the real Maitland until the year 1802, in the course of the debates prior to the conclusion of the Treaty of Amiens. On the 14th of May 1802, he reviewed those provisions of the treaty relating to subjects on which he had special knowledge, commencing with Louisiana, which was to be ceded by Spain to France. The alarmists, of whom Maitland had formerly been the leader, were panic-stricken over this clause. From Louisiana, they declared, France would be able at one and the same time to menace Mexico, the United States and the British West Indies. Maitland reminded the House that Louisiana was originally a French colony, that it had long been in French hands, and that it had always been, as he expressed it, 'totally imbecile.' As to attacking the British West Indies (he went on), France, in order to do that, must have 'passes from the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Admiralty.' Had honourable members, he continued with crushing sarcasm, never heard of the British Navy? Was it possible that they could suppose that a great military power was formidable to us so long as she was not also a great naval power?

He next turned to San Domingo, and warned the House not to be deceived about the state of that island. He had heard honourable members talk about the 'Free Republic' of San Domingo. Let them not be deluded: 'free anarchy' would be nearer the mark. As for the Cape of Good Hope, which we ceded by the treaty, it was of the less consequence to us since we retained Ceylon. The retention of that island practically made our East Indian possessions secure. The last point was Malta, which he thought we were doing well to evacuate, and on the whole he approved the treaty.

Here indeed is a most extraordinary contrast with the Maitland of ten years before. But this is the real Maitland, now at the age of forty-three, for the first time in his life in his element. San Domingo and the United States had wonderfully sobered him. He had seen something of the real work of the empire, and he had rapidly, and as if by instinct, grasped the principles on which it was founded—the maintenance of sea-power, the holding of points of vantage, the ready surrender of all that was not vital, the conciliatory temper, the moderation which is but the expression of force in reserve. The empire had fired Maitland in the way that nothing else had done; his speech has the true ring of statesmanship. The empire, at any rate, was a thing over which there must be no trifling. Here was work better worth doing than scoring points over a Bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

In the debate on the resumption of hostilities, he spoke even more finely. In the course of December 1802, on the increased Army Estimates which Maitland supported, Samuel Whitbread made a tearful speech in which he assured the House that France meant no harm. He followed this up in May 1803 by defending France against our insults and trickeries. Sebastiani's Report, he said, which was alleged as the cause of the rupture or relations between France and England, was only an answer to Robert Wilson's 'Egypt.' He mourned over the iniquities of England, and inconveniently reminded his old colleague, Maitland, of his opinion that Malta, for which we were going to war was not an important post for us to hold.

Maitland simply and finely replied that it was true that he did not think much of Malta, although it was a strong place. Personally, if he had been the responsible minister he should not have gone to war on account of Malta. But it was enough for him that Malta was in the ultimatum; and he should embarrass the Ministry with no comments.

The event of the debate was the maiden speech or Dallas, afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

Samuel Whitbread had inquired with an air of mournful mystification why we were going to war. Dallas's peroration ran as follows:—'For what are we going to war? It is fit, says the honourable gentleman, that the people of England should know. I

agree with him that it is; and therefore to the honourable gentleman and to the people of England, I explicitly say we are going to war for Malta, not for Malta only, but for Egypt, not for Egypt only, but for India, not for India only, but for the integrity and security of the British Empire, for the cause of justice, good faith and freedom throughout the civilized world.'

This fighting mood was now Maitland's own. Not that he delivered many fighting speeches; but his temper, always belligerent, now led him to attack huge masses of work, complicated situations and difficult problems. The empire was his true sphere of action. When he spoke, he spoke shortly and moderately. He rapidly grew to acquire the man of action's hatred of wordiness; and beyond that considerable change in his character, we shall find that in the course of his official career he developed traits of character which not the most intimate friend would have ventured to ascribe to him. He was to show an admirable tact, an almost womanly tenderness in handling men when coaxing could be of use. He was to prove himself one of the greatest of the builders of Greater Britain; great not only because of the vast extent of the work that he accomplished, but because of the manner in which he accomplished it.

It did not suffice for Maitland that a piece of work was done; it must be done in the right way, or he was

not satisfied. To attain this end there was nothing he would not do. In the King's name he would bully and cringe, if bullying and cringing would advance His Majesty's service. His enemies said that Tom Maitland would bully and cringe because he liked doing so; but nobody ever accused Tom Maitland of being a patient man; and yet on the King's service he bore with affronts from his equals, and impertinence from his inferiors, with a temper not only under control, but apparently of angelic sweetness. 'The King's service' was the talisman that steadied and almost transformed him. If Maitland was a bully, the first man that he bullied was himself; if he was a slave-driver, no slave was driven harder than Maitland under the lash of his own imperious will.

If there were no difficulties in any given course, Maitland was not the man to make any; but he turned eagerly in some direction where he might find difficulties. To overcome these he would coax or bribe, menace or entertain, listen or bully, as occasion served; but his last argument, which he always delivered fiercely as if threatening a blow, was, 'The King's service, sir.' And when on more awful occasions Maitland would say, 'The honour of His Majesty's service, sir,' opposition to his will seemed to be rank treason, and the very air breathed courts-martial.

CHAPTER III

SAN DOMINGO—THE WEST INDIAN INTEREST—TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE—MAITLAND 'RESCUES AND RETIRES'

In 1897, the year of so many inspiriting national reflections for Englishmen, we shall do well to recall that one hundred years—no more—separate us from a year not only of national humiliation, but of what appeared at the time to be complete national collapse.

In the year 1797, George Washington completed his second term in the Presidency, and was succeeded by John Adams. This peaceful succession of President to President was the outward and visible sign of political conditions justifying the moan, 'The sun of England's glory is set.' It was plain that North America, our greatest and wealthiest colony, after some years of hesitation had definitely resolved to separate from the Mother Country.

We have found compensations elsewhere since then; but in 1797, wherever we looked we saw nothing but what emphasised the sense of disaster. In Europe we were reeling under the first buffets of Napoleon

Buonaparte. We had been utterly and ignominiously expelled from the Mediterranean; we had lost our trade there, and — which was worse — we had the mortification of seeing that France intended to use the Mediterranean as a route to the East. We were only partly compensated for this serious loss by the acquisition of the Cape of Good Hope. Both in Leadenhall Street and in Calcutta, the deepest anxiety prevailed: the East India merchants saw ruin staring them in the face. America was gone, the Mediterranean was gone, India was threatened. At home things were even worse. Ireland was in one of her most dangerous moods, and rebellion was clearly imminent. The harvest failed, the Bank of England suspended payment. Consols fell to 51. Short of revolution there was nothing worse to expect; and revolution seemed not so far off to some of us.

With our back to the wall we struck two heavy blows—St Vincent and the Texel—and recovered breath a little; but even after these glorious victories Collingwood—cheery, sanguine Collingwood—could write, 'It is a question whether we are to be any longer a nation.'

These were the disheartening conditions under which Maitland left England to assume the duties of his first important colonial appointment. The duties were themselves depressing, for they were the duties attending the evacuation of San Domingo.

But Maitland carried them out with a brave and confident bearing, and in the face of unparalleled obstacles. 'Unparalleled' is a bold word; we shall have to see how far it is justified.

The important island of San Domingo, or Hispaniola, or Hayti, was at this time an object of importance to the West Indian interest. 'The West Indian interest' sounds almost a mockery to-day; but a century ago it rivalled the East Indian interest. The basis of its power, of course, was slavery. Ill-disposed people said that the whole abolition movement was only a trade agitation on the part of the East Indian interest. When we remember how many serious, banking names figure in the list of abolitionists we may, perhaps, admit that there was a superficial justification for the sneer. Whether there was more than a superficial justification is not a question into which we need inquire; but that the West Indian interest could ever have been spoken of as a rival to the East Indian is a state of things that we find it hard to realise to-day without some assistance, and we must endeavour to realise it in order to understand Maitland's troubles.

San Domingo was divided into two portions—the west to France, the east to Spain. Since 1795 it had been nominally all French. Since 1793 the western portion had been in the hands of a British expedition. In point of fact the whole island, outside cantonments, was ruled by Toussaint L'Ouverture, a

full-blooded negro. But there were signs that the mulattos under Rigaud might succeed in overthrowing him. The whites all inclined to England, because of the decrees of 1791 (giving the mulattos the rights of French citizens) and of 1793 (enfranchising the slaves). The evil example of freed blacks in a colony so large and important as San Domingo horrified and alarmed the Jamaica planters, and they were all in favour of retaining our hold on the island. But Maitland's orders were to retire.

When we say 'Maitland's orders,' we are speaking loosely. In point of fact Maitland had no orders, except to obey Nesbitt, who never arrived. Mr Pitt was nervously anxious to put an end to the intolerable drain on our resources that was caused by the continued occupation of San Domingo. So Nesbitt was hurried off in the *Swan* sloop-of-war from Portsmouth, while Maitland followed with the staff in the packet from Falmouth. Nesbitt fell sick at Madeira, and never reached his destination. Thus to the difficulties naturally attending the state of chaos in which San Domingo then weltered, there was superadded the unique difficulty that nobody in authority had any instructions. The officer in command was General Whyte, who was impatiently waiting to be replaced by Nesbitt, and had no intention of burning his fingers over the business. To him Maitland intimated that he knew what Nesbitt's instructions were, but that he had been told them in confidence,

and had no authority to communicate them. Whyte, irritated perhaps, issued some orders to Maitland, who replied that he would not be responsible for the results if they were carried out, but that if the orders were repeated he would obey them. Whyte rejoined by inquiring, in effect, whether he commanded in San Domingo, or not?

Maitland, with unruffled politeness, admitted Whyte's authority, but gently urged that by Whyte's own showing and desire that authority was of a fleeting character. He made a further allusion to the mysterious instructions, and Whyte thereupon scornfully inquired whether (although he might not be honoured by hearing the decision of the Cabinet) Maitland would feel justified at taking over the command of the island from him? This was precisely what Maitland hoped would happen. He joyfully accepted Whyte's offer; and the General, only too thankful to be quit of the disagreeable business, sailed for England and left Maitland to evolve order out of chaos, since that was to his taste. The man was exactly suited to the work. To overcome difficulties, to unravel tangled skeins, was as the breath of life to Maitland. The slow and orderly procedure of a settled administration had no charms for him; in fact, it exasperated him, and whenever, in his various charges, public affairs, owing to Maitland's exertions, began to assume a settled aspect, Maitland himself would fall to quarrelling out of sheer *ennui*.

The island of San Domingo breaks towards the west into two peninsulas or horns, the one pointing toward Cuba, the other toward Jamaica. At the tip of the northern horn is Cape Mole St Nicholas; the southern horn terminates near the town and district of Jérémie. At the apex of the irregular triangle, and far in the body of the island, is Port au Prince. The entire coast line of this deep indenture was held by the English; and the instructions of the Cabinet were definite as to the evacuation of all of it except the points of vantage at the extremities of the two horns. These might be retained for the defence of Jamaica, at any rate for the present; the rest was to be abandoned, and the whole cost of our occupation to be brought down from £700,000 per annum to, at most, £300,000. The expenses of the evacuation were not to exceed £100,000.

To give any hint of these instructions would have been to precipitate a stampede, to bring about massacres and retaliation which would have loaded us with infamy and entailed a vast destruction of property. Nevertheless, the instructions had to be carried out, and carried out forthwith. Hesitation could only result in our being simply expelled, and that speedily. We had to choose, Maitland wrote, between a disgraceful surrender and a timely evacuation; and without some lull in the tempest of political hates and fears that distracted the island, even an evacuation became daily more and more of an impossibility.

It was a situation where any man might be excused for losing his head; but Maitland never wavered for an hour. To steady public opinion he issued a proclamation stoutly denying the ill-conditioned rumours that we were about to retire and desert our friends. This may have been unprincipled, but it was eminently humane. Moreover, he wove in a patch of truth when he said that we should not desert our friends.

Ever since the day he landed he had been studying the island politics, and he had now mastered them. The whites were all on our side, for they had no one else to look to. But they were as clamorous as they were powerless, and were continually reinforced by immigrants from England, who had been emigrants from France or San Domingo, and who all needed employment. So Maitland had admirals and generals serving under him as second lieutenants—which he found very embarrassing: but 'the climate comes to our help, and provides for most of them,' he added with ghastly composure. The utmost that we could do with the whites was to make them safe from their foes; to see that they were not massacred. For this we should, of course, get more curses than thanks, but that could not be helped.

The temper in which he set about this, the most delicate part of his task, was well set forth by Maitland himself as early as October 1797, when at Walthamstow, he first heard of his appointment, and learnt what his duties would be.

'Great forbearance,' he wrote, 'must be shown towards the people during the evacuation. Nothing can be got by teasing and fretting a set of men who will deem themselves unfortunate, with a superciliousness of manner and a hauteur of demeanour at all times unpleasant, but which must be peculiarly abhorrent to Frenchmen in their situation.'

This praiseworthy frame of mind is not at all in consonance with the accepted view of Maitland's manner and behaviour; but the plain truth is, that as success followed success, and the Maitland of San Domingo grew into the King Tom of Corfu, the cynicism of his nature, completely under control or perhaps not yet developed in his earlier years, prompted him to outbursts of scorn and temper that he never would have allowed himself while his reputation was still to make.

The proof that his written sentiments were not merely pious opinions is to be found in what he achieved at the period of the evacuation. He prevented a stampede, and thus saved many lives and a vast amount of property. He not only prevented the French from losing faith in our intentions (which they would have been perfectly justified in doing), but, astounding though it may appear, he gave them confidence in the order of things that he managed to establish and leave behind him when he retired. The very men who, at the mere rumour of our retirement, were ready to denounce us as assassins

for leaving them to the mercy of Toussaint, did not hesitate, when the convention was concluded to return to the land they had prepared to abandon, and to dwell under Toussaint's government.

Having, by the proclamation before alluded to, somewhat calmed the public mind, Maitland sent an emissary to visit Toussaint in his camp. He selected the negro as the person to negotiate with for these reasons. Setting aside the whites, there were three parties in the island—the French, the mulattos and the blacks. Maitland had landed at Cape Mole St Nicholas on the 11th of March 1798. On the 10th of April, Hédouville landed from France with full power from the Directory to settle the affairs of the island and bring San Domingo back under French control. So long as we could withdraw our troops without bloodshed, it was a matter of indifference to Maitland who ruled in the island; and as the French plenipotentiary was, at any rate, a properly constituted diplomatic officer with whom it was possible to enter into binding undertakings, many a man would have been tempted to open negotiations with him. But Maitland always looked to where the real power resided; and his opinion of Hédouville was that, although he was called a plenipotentiary, he was in reality only a state prisoner of Toussaint's. 'If he is ever to regain any authority for France,' he wrote, 'he will have to fight his way through seas of blood.' This is a terribly accurate prophecy of the French

expedition of 1803, which cost the life of General Leclerc, Buonaparte's brother-in-law, and 6000 Frenchmen ; to say nothing of the losses of the natives.

Maitland, therefore, paid no attention to Hédouville. There remained Rigaud the mulatto, and Toussaint L'Ouverture. Rigaud's following was comparatively small, but he was himself a man of great energy and resource, and a much more bitter enemy of England than Toussaint. It would perhaps be more accurate to say that he was more ardently devoted to the cause of France ; for he had been outlawed by the Republic, and hoped to secure the removal of the ban by showing extra zeal in opposing the English. Clearly, there was nothing to be done with Rigaud.

Toussaint L'Ouverture was a savage, but a savage of a high type. He was a man with the governing instinct, capable of compromise, and even preferring it to harsh measures. There was much said about his cruelties ; and no doubt there is a vast difference between war as waged by a penniless, ignorant, full-blooded negro, founding an empire by means of a revolution, and a modern general commanding a *corps d'armée* of Europeans, and carefully watched by representatives of leading London newspapers. But if we remember that when once his power was founded he more than doubled his influence by the mildness of his rule, we need not be too curious about some incidents of the battlefield. Maitland was not there to enter into the question of Toussaint's

humanity or inhumanity. His business was to get the English out of San Domingo without a disaster if possible, and he addressed himself to Toussaint L'Ouverture in such language as that remarkable savage might be expected to understand.

The negotiations were not opened until after some fighting had taken place; it was hardly to be expected that they should be. Scarcely a fortnight after Maitland landed, on the 27th of March, a force of 6000 negroes under Toussaint himself attacked the British force under De Peystre, and were repulsed with the loss of nearly 500 men. The next day De Peystre followed up his victory and inflicted the loss of 200 more. The English lost 7 officers and 80 men killed and wounded, a loss which they could afford much less easily than the negro chief. Disease and death and the impossibility of recruiting made our ultimate defeat a certainty; especially as numerous desertions to the enemy were taking place from our coloured regiments. This determined attempt on the part of Toussaint to expel us by force was supplemented by a separate attack on the same date on Count O'Gorman at Croix de Bouquets, an outpost a few miles north-east of Port au Prince. This attack also failed.

It was a good thing for the English that Toussaint was a little too eager. The wholesome impression of these two beatings made him more amenable to terms.

His ambition, of course, extended to the dominion of the whole island, and it would be a great step towards that end if he could only get rid of the English. The opportunity of doing so peaceably was now offered to him by Maitland. Without troubling his savage foe with complicated conditions, the English general, by word of mouth of a confidential officer under a flag of truce, set forth the following terms: Either the English retire after blowing up the fortifications and destroying the private property of the citizens who will leave San Domingo with them, or, if the negro chief choose to come to terms and grant security to life and property, the English will leave the forts and all the private estates untouched. The advantage of accepting and observing these terms will be mutual; the English will gain by being enabled to embark without the fear of attack, and Toussaint will enjoy the immeasurable increase to his reputation that will spring from it becoming known that he can keep an agreement, and that white citizens are contented to dwell under his government.

These terms were accepted on the 30th of April 1798, a little more than seven weeks after Maitland landed; and the immediate effect of them was that many inhabitants of Port au Prince and the neighbourhood who had already embarked returned to shore and took up their residence under the new government. Ten planters only preferred to sail with Maitland. At noon on the 7th of May he evacuated

L'Arcahaye; at two in the morning of the 8th he evacuated Port au Prince. St Marc had been evacuated three days earlier.

So far, then, the first part of his enterprise had gone well. From chaos he had evolved something like order; in the place of universal panic there was general confidence. He had rightly calculated that Toussaint was possessed of sufficient intelligence to appreciate the advantage of white subjects: the negro behaved very well, and the whites were gratified at not having to face poverty as well as expatriation. 'I shall be contented,' wrote Maitland, 'if Government think as well of what I have done as the French who have decided to remain.'

But the wear and tear had been frightful, and Maitland was very ill. He laboured all day, and far into the night. Upon his shoulders alone rested the responsibility of every step that was taken, the most trifling as well as the most important, and all this time he was acting solely in the spirit of orders given to another man; orders which had been communicated to him in confidence only, which might have been revoked for all he knew, which might be at the bottom of the sea, or in the hands of the French, or which Nesbitt, when he arrived, might interpret quite differently from himself.

Those orders were definite as regarded that part of them already carried out; but discretion was allowed in respect of the rest of them. There was no doubt

about the propriety of evacuating Port au Prince, but the tips of the two horns of Hayti—Cape Mole St Nicholas and Jérémie—'might be' retained, if necessary, for the protection of Jamaica. At Port au Prince the difficulty had been to deal in a satisfactory manner with Toussaint L'Ouverture; the danger had been that the English and the French whites might all have been killed in battle, or—if Toussaint prolonged the negotiations—killed by fever. In his new position there was no more fear from the natives. Toussaint had no fleet, and he could only reach us overland by long marches that would have wasted his forces in a most unprofitable manner. Besides, he had his hands full with Rigaud and La Plume, the Mulatto leaders.

The difficulty of the new situation lay in the two words 'might be.' The questions Maitland had to answer were: Were the positions necessary in point of fact? Did Jamaica think them necessary? Did Maitland himself think them necessary? Would the Ministry be likely to agree with him if he decided that they were? Anxious, most anxious questions; and the only counsellors whom Maitland could call to his aid were Dundas, the Secretary of State, who was six weeks off by post, and who could not make up his own mind, and Balcarres, the Governor of Jamaica, who (whatever his private opinions might be) was the official representative of the West Indian interest.

Heavy indeed was the task that Maitland pondered as he sailed for Cape Mole St Nicholas with 4800 emigrants from Port au Prince, whites and slaves, who followed the British flag. The first news that met him was that everything was going wrong at Jérémie. 'It all comes,' he wrote angrily, 'of Spencer stuffing all his men into one or two places, and leaving no flying force to keep up communication.' Spencer was the officer in command, and Maitland determined to inquire strictly into the failure of his campaign. 'I am much concerned,' he wrote, 'at the outbreak of offensive operations; . . . we had better strike a blow at once, than go on in a state of perpetual petty warfare, draining our purses and killing our men.' No doubt: but in a country where there are no roads, and every thicket is a natural fortress, to strike a blow at once is what no guerilla leader will give his foe a chance of doing; and to keep up petty warfare, to drain his enemy's purse and kill off his men one by one is the whole art of war. Maitland was more indulgent when he had seen the difficulties for himself, and he wrote that Spencer had shown great personal gallantry, and had not done so badly, although he had been defeated.

Immediately on arriving at Cape Mole St Nicholas Maitland proclaimed martial law, and abolished the civil courts of the place. This measure, he said, not only discouraged litigation, but effected a very material economy in the expenses of administration. No doubt

he was right in thinking, too, that the forms of civil process were not a little out of place in a state of society such as that obtaining in San Domingo in May 1798. But although he was severely censured (as indeed what vigorous officer has not been?) by the stay-at-homes, it is remarkable that he only had need to make one severe example during the course of his negotiations with Toussaint. By proclamation dated the 26th of April, the Sieur Peyrade, convicted of highly seditious conduct, was condemned to be blown from a gun on the heights of St Robin at five o'clock in the afternoon. It was some time before Maitland heard the last of Peyrade's execution; but the prompt measure probably saved much bloodshed, and enabled him to carry out the evacuation without distressing confusion.

Having, during his brief stay at Cape Mole St Nicholas, set things in something like order, he sailed for Jérémie, at the tip of the southern horn of the island, to set matters right after Spencer's overthrow. The southern horn thickens considerably towards the tip. Jérémie is a little to the east, along the north shore; still further east, along the south shore, is Aux Cayes. The extreme north-easterly bulge of the horn is Cape Dame Marie; the extreme south-westerly bulge of the horn is Cape Les Trois, just north of Tiburon. The capture of Tiburon, long a favourite plan with the troops, was the object of Maitland's expedition. The Admiral, Sir Hyde

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Parker, sent him the *York*, the *Torturelle*, the *Rattle* and the *Drake* to help him; and 1700 colonial troops were marched overland on the 11th of June to cut off Tiburon from Aux Cayes. On the 15th, Maitland himself arrived by sea at Les Anglais, a bay between Tiburon and Aux Cayes, and duly met his colonial troops. But beyond hailing each other they could effect nothing; for the surf would not allow Maitland's men to land. He lost some men in trying, and then gave up the attempt, resting satisfied with having frightened Rigaud and captured five guns. It was something, too, to have extricated his colonial troops from what had now become a very perilous situation. This was the only incident of the evacuation that fell short of complete success.

By the 6th of July he was back again at Cape Mole St Nicholas, and was able to report the result of his measures to compensate the emigrants from Port au Prince. Colonel Grant had been appointed President of the Board for this purpose, and had received the following instructions. The well-to-do were not to be compensated at all. Any person claiming compensation on the ground of services rendered to Government was to establish his claim in the clearest manner. The very poor might receive a compassionate allowance. 'I will be just if I can,' Maitland wrote, 'but I will by no means be generous.' Possibly with this end in view he effected something less than justice; but he certainly attained his grand object of conducting

the evacuation economically. The outside limit of expenditure permitted him on this head was £100,000; his actual outlay was a trifle under one-half of this sum, being a little short of £50,000. He might well congratulate himself on such a result.

He now addressed himself to the most serious problem of the relations of Hayti to Jamaica. Already while at Jérémie he had communicated with Earl Balcarres. In writing to the Governor of Jamaica he presumed that a copy of Nesbitt's instructions had been forwarded to him; but expressed his own fear that Nesbitt might be at the bottom of the sea. Returning to the instructions, however, he reminded Lord Balcarres that under them the Governor of Jamaica was to decide whether Maitland should retire or hold on. It was important to decide, because matters were growing critical. How critical they were he now proceeded to detail to Dundas. 'The British force,' he said, 'may now be truly said to be in a galloping consumption. Since May we have lost 200 men by disease. Our cavalry is perfectly useless for campaigning in a country like this, and our effective force will soon be under 500 men. Feeding on salt food in the tropics is not the way to keep troops healthy, and we are excessively short of officers. With such a force as this we can do nothing, of course, and the enemy grows bolder as he perceives our weakness.' Undoubtedly, he wrote, Jamaica would be much benefited by the presence of English

troops at Cape Mole St Nicholas and Jérémie ; but it simply cannot be done under half a million a year. This sum was midway between the former excessive outlay of over £700,000, and the sum of £300,000 which Mr Pitt thought should be sufficient for the effective occupation of the island.

This despatch is dated the 6th of July 1798, and on the 22d of August, Dundas wrote to Knox, Maitland's destined successor, naming this exact sum as the amount the Ministry was prepared to spend on San Domingo for the protection of Jamaica. With a quick passage the letters might have crossed, but the evacuation had been completed long before Knox had a chance to act on his instructions.

The reference to Balcarres did not bring Maitland much comfort. Balcarres had not seen Nesbitt's instructions ; and as he gathered that Maitland himself had no copy of them, he declined all responsibility in advising him as to the evacuation. He wrote, however, in a friendly spirit, expressed himself as much obliged to Maitland for his report, and in spite of his refusal to enter into the question of the evacuation, he wrote at great length on the subject, although somewhat discursively. Personally, he said, he looked on Jérémie as an outpost of Jamaica ; for Jamaica lies open through Jérémie to the attacks of San Domingo, and (which is much worse) to the propagation of the dangerous opinions which are rife in that island. Banditti could land with fatal ease from either Cuba

or San Domingo, and then the defence of Jamaica would become a most serious matter. The white troops could not campaign in the lowlands; they would have to be withdrawn from the coast, and the total force necessary for the defence of the island would be at least 8800 men. However, taking Maitland's view that Toussaint was the destined winner in San Domingo, there was a plan that had elements of success in it. This was to arm the Jamaica negroes, make common cause with Toussaint, subdue the mulattos, expel the French, and bind San Domingo and Jamaica together. Unfortunately the Jamaica planters had not the nerve for so large a scheme, and they were alarmed at the mere suggestion of arming the blacks. On the whole, perhaps, Maitland had better evacuate Jérémie.

There was not much backbone in this advice. Lord Balcarres's letter was really an intelligent and conversational essay on the conditions of the problem rather than a piece of counsel. Nothing could be more friendly than his style; but the matter was so pleasantly impartial, so much more the deliverance of a disinterested spectator than of one who (if what he said was true) might at any hour find himself fighting for his life, that Maitland might well have shown some disappointment. But he did not do so. Throughout his official career Maitland was always the strong man supporting the weak, the man of resource coming to the aid of the helpless, and here,

as everywhere else, it was only on Thomas Maitland that Thomas Maitland could rely.

However, he was consoled by a letter from Dundas which reached him a few days later. The Secretary was carried away altogether by Maitland's performance. He overflowed with expressions of gratitude and relief. The 'unexampled situation' in which Maitland found himself owing to Nesbitt's illness was one in which he had acted with the Secretary's perfect approbation. He conveyed the 'warmest acknowledgments' of the Cabinet for the arrangements relative to the evacuation. The agreement with Toussaint L'Ouverture was not only judicious in itself, but liberally conceived, careful of the interests at stake, and generously carried out. The reduction of the expenditure was very satisfactory. The constitution of the Emigrants' Board was perfectly proper; and Maitland had borne himself throughout his arduous services with humanity and dignity.

This was the kind of letter that Maitland liked to receive: he had none of the Duke of Wellington's icy indifference to other men's opinions. He knew that he did better than other men, and liked to know that his superiors knew it. Men said that he was vain; perhaps: he had something to be vain of. They said that he liked flattery; very likely: most men do, and those most of all who affect to be indifferent to it. But surely, if Dundas's letter be flattery, what is just acknowledgment? The plain truth was that Maitland had done a piece of work

that nobody but himself could have done. He created the conditions in which he acted; he created the very opinion on which he played; and that which he had rescued by his efforts was nothing less than the lives of many whites and many more blacks, and the honour of the British name. Such services are not rendered every day; and if Maitland throughout his official career was constantly receiving letters like that just summarized, it was not because flattery was necessary to keep him up to the mark, but because he was continually rendering services of such magnitude that only exceptional acknowledgments were appropriate to them. His work was approved; but his health was broken. 'Let me have leave,' he wrote by every packet. 'I ought not to remain in San Domingo another day.' 'I may hold out another fortnight.' 'I am completely knocked up.' 'I shall never recover the shock to my health.' 'The perpetual attacks of disease incident to a tropical climate wear a man out beyond belief.' He does not say what disease—dysentery probably. But what is remarkable about these moans are that they proceed from a man who is, at the moment of uttering them, carrying out work beyond the strength of any men but those of the toughest fibre—the Grants, the Wellingtons, the Strathnairns. Throughout his life Maitland always presented this singular spectacle, that he worked like a Hercules, and wrote of himself like a valetudinarian—even a hysterical valetudinarian.

What remained to do after receiving Dundas's letter was comparatively easy. There were no enemies near Cape Mole St Nicholas; and Jérémie was only feebly menaced by Rigaud. But Maitland was extremely anxious to send his San Domingo refugees to Jamaica. There was, however, a colonial law forbidding the importation of French slaves into that island. If Cape Mole St Nicholas were retained, Balcarres undertook to secure the admission of one regiment of Colonials and a few French emigrants, but if not, he would positively decline to receive any.

By August 1798, however, it had become clear that without the despatch of a fresh army from England, this condition could not be fulfilled. Sir Hyde Parker was vehemently opposed to the evacuation, as of course were all the Jamaica planters. But Maitland's reasoning was unanswerable. The place, he wrote, is only strong because it is difficult of approach by water. By land it is weak, in spite of its five blockhouses. If we remain here till the enemy close round us, we shall have just as much trouble to get out of Cape Mole St Nicholas as we had to get out of Port au Prince. So, as Balcarres could do nothing for him, he disbanded the Colonials and sent them back to where they were levied. Jérémie was evacuated on the 20th of August, Cayemite on the 24th, and Les Trois on the 27th; in each case the withdrawal of the British took place with the greatest order and tranquillity. Maitland sailed on the 31st,

and the evacuation of the Mole was completed by Colonel Spencer on the 2d of October.

In his last letter from San Domingo, written to Huskisson, Maitland expressed his anxiety as to the views of the Ministry, and the meeting with them to which he had to look forward. 'For that meeting,' he wrote, 'I am not a little solicitous, as I have a great deal to answer for if I have been wrong, and if I have been right, I shall at least have it to say I have effected my object more fortunately and at less expense than any man previously could possibly have imagined.'

He need not have been anxious: from the moment after he landed at Falmouth from San Domingo, he was a marked man. He was immediately employed on a mission even more trying than that to San Domingo, inasmuch as it was from the outset hopeless. In San Domingo he had to face stupendous difficulties; but in his negotiations in the United States he had to face impossibilities: from the outset he was set to weave ropes of sand.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNITED STATES—BELLEISLE—THE BOARD OF CONTROL—THE PRIVY COUNCIL—ESTIMATE OF MAITLAND AS A SOLDIER AND AS A STATESMAN

In his agreement with Toussaint L'Ouverture, Maitland had (in addition to the articles of the armistice) arranged the terms on which commerce was to be carried on. Port au Prince was to be the only open port of the island, and only those vessels were to be allowed to ply that were furnished with passports. This did not affect Toussaint, because he had no ships; and it did offer a certain measure of protection to British trade, because it empowered our cruisers to seize the numerous if diminutive privateers of San Domingo. These boats, though dignified by the name of pirate-ships, were, in reality, too small to effect much damage: but they could cause a good deal of annoyance to trade, and the passport clause was a useful one from every point of view.

We had reckoned, however, without the government of the United States. At first Mr Rufus King,

who represented the States in London, was disposed to view the growth of English influence in San Domingo favourably. 'The French,' he wrote to Dundas in December 1798, 'prey on our commerce just as if we were at war with them, and San Domingo is a frequent and convenient port of call.' That being the case, one would have supposed that in order to secure the advantage of an ocean-highway patrolled by an efficient fleet, he would have been prepared to submit to some restrictions on trade as a reasonable condition of improved ease in traffic. But one of these restrictions—that relating to the import of provisions—he looked on as damaging to American trade, and accordingly he moved the Secretary of State to revise Maitland's convention in a direction more favourable to American interests.

The Secretary at once acceded, and turned to Maitland as the man best fitted to conduct the fresh negotiations. There were elements of success in the mission. The chief source of wealth in the Southern States, as well as in our own West Indian colonies, was, of course, the cultivation carried on by slave labour. The Americans, therefore, were just as much menaced as ourselves by the existence of a free black republic so near to their own coasts. Our interests in trade did not clash; the Americans supplying grain and little else, while the English supplied manufactured goods and little else. The first plan suggested was, accordingly, that a close company should be formed

on that basis, with a joint undertaking on the part of the two governments to forbid the importation of arms. This, however, was construed as an infringement of the constitution of the United States. Other excuses less sound were urged from time to time, as we shall see, in order to prevent a solution of the San Domingo question; but before we accompany Maitland to Philadelphia, we shall do well to study another side to Toussaint L'Ouverture's character, the side that came most prominently forward in the course of these negotiations. Toussaint just fell short of being a great figure in history. At this period, the zenith of his power, when France was trying in vain to coerce him, and while England and the United States were bidding for his favour, he still retained the quaint forms of Republican correspondence; he still headed his proclamations—

Liberté *Egalité*
an 8ᵉ *de la Republique Française*
une et indivisible

le 12 *pluviose*, or whatever the date might be. This, perhaps, was from a diplomatic reluctance to break altogether with France. But it seems more probable that it was from ignorance of any other calendar. He had a superstitious respect for anything in print, and Maitland often found Toussaint's mind occupied with productions like the following—'*La scélératesse du machiavellisme brittanique*

s'est élevé à un si haut degré de démence et d'atrocité qu'elle ne saurait être comparée qu'à la folle audace des géants de la fable révoltés contre Jupiter et les Dieux d'Olympe.' '*Le Gouvernement anglais . . . . s'est chargé de tous les crimes de l'espèce humaine à dater du jour désastreux où Georges trois a pris le bandeau royal.*'

'*C'est cet imbécile monarque, ce sont ces détestables ministres,*' . . . *etc., etc.*

Toussaint took this kind of composition as seriously as the London *Gazette*. They were both in print; and any attempt to draw a distinction between them only served to strengthen the impression produced on his mind by the French publication. To make a simple agreement of a few clauses with a man like this is possible, although difficult, but to make him understand the full meaning of a somewhat complicated treaty, and rightly to grasp the bearing on the future of each provision of it, is an impossibility.

There remained the difficulties in the United States, difficulties which met Maitland on his landing, and which were never surmounted. It was with some diffidence that he accepted the mission, for he was, he said, quite ignorant of diplomatic business. He stipulated for a frigate for the round trip—Madeira, Philadelphia, San Domingo, Jamaica and home. He asked to be accompanied by Grant, formerly chairman of the Emigrants' Board at Cape Mole St Nicholas, and destined to be our Resident Consul at Port au

Prince under the regulations that Maitland was about to establish; by Nightingall as secretary, and (oddly enough) by a physician, Dr Wright. His conditions were at once accepted; and on his complaining of the *Danaë*, the ship first placed at his disposal, it was changed for the *Camilla*.

Travelling in this considerable state he reached Madeira on the 24th of February 1799. From this island he wrote a long despatch on the state of affairs there which seems to have made an impression. The French, he said, have now made peace with the Emperor; their next victim will certainly be Spain or Portugal. In that event, why should not England take Madeira? Very large sums of English capital were embarked in the wine trade of the island; and as the neighbouring island of Teneriffe was neither more nor less than a rendezvous, or rather a home, of pirates (for the privateers were all owned by the resident inhabitants), a large squadron would soon be necessary to keep guard over our wine trade. Since they must be there, why should they not (in the event of the island becoming French by the conquest of Portugal) make good use of their time? The islands, as they were when Maitland wrote, were perfectly defenceless, and the first comer who took the place and fortified it would be able to hold it against all assailants with ease.

This was actually done on the 23d of June 1801, or just two years after Maitland wrote, when the

island was occupied by England in consequence of the article in the Treaty of Badajoz, by which Portugal agreed with France to exclude British shipping from Madeira and her other ports.

Maitland arrived at Philadelphia on the 2d of April 1799; interviewed Robert Liston, our minister to the States, and immediately reported to Dundas that there were very grave fears of the failure of his mission. The mission, in effect, included coming to terms with Balcarres, Toussaint and the government of the United States. Balcarres, no doubt, would do all that he could, although the Colonial Assembly might be troublesome. We have seen what Toussaint was like; he was ignorant and suspicious, but he did really wish to arrive at some definite understanding with us. The government of the United States, however, had no such desire. The only convention that they would ever consent to sign was one where each clause nullified the other, and the net result was that things stood as they were at the commencement. This was heartrending work, but Maitland went throught it assiduously and conscientiously. He followed the Secretary to each new position that he took up, went over the ground again and again, cast and re-cast the terms of the convention, remaining all the while conscious that he was only marking time.

To add to the confusion, Toussaint sent to Philadelphia an envoy of his own, who was favourably received, and with whom the States opened direct

negotiations. 'The game is taken totally out of our hands,' Maitland wrote; the only chance remaining being, that while our wishes were altogether neglected, both Toussaint and the States were reckoning on a state of peaceful navigation that was secured solely by the presence of the British navy. So that while we had ourselves created, and could alone maintain, the conditions that made negotiations possible, we were the only parties to the discussion whose wishes were neglected. A plenipotentiary empowered to urge this view forcibly might perhaps be listened to; but certainly nobody else would be.

In so far as this disobliging attitude had any business basis, such a basis was to be found in the fact that at this time American so-called trade was really very little more than gambling. But slender capital was embarked in it, and the profits were very large—if the vessel was not captured. The element of uncertainty rather attracted the Americans than alarmed them, and they had no desire to regularize the situation. But Maitland, though he modestly said that he was no diplomatist, contrived out of this most unpromising situation to extract a few points on which England and America could be brought to agree; and wrote, with truth, of 'our present happy understanding with America.' The Secretary did in the end agree that England and the States had interests in common, viz., to keep San Domingo quiet, and to keep out the French. As to all the rest, the United

States remained unpledged, and Maitland saw that further negotiations would be a mere waste of time.

He sailed for San Domingo, greatly depressed at the meagre result of his efforts, and found just that state of confusion that might have been expected when the two great powers concerned were obviously incapable of coming to an understanding. Toussaint continued to flout the French commissioner; and the Directory, in revenge, sent their dispatches to Rigaud. Rigaud, encouraged by this attitude on the part of the government that had once outlawed him, finally broke with Toussaint, and the island became a scene of bloodshed and torture from end to end. 'America had much better have concurred in our proposals,' Maitland groaned; and then this would not have happened. There was just a last possibility that Grant's appointment as Resident Consul-General at Port au Prince might develope into the nucleus of some permanent settlement of the difficulty. But the Directory had been before us, and had forwarded to Toussaint various comments of the French press on Grant's appointment, couched in the kind of language that has been already quoted. The impression left on Toussaint's mind was that Grant was a coercive agent of the wicked English Government, and that to allow him to enter on his duties would be but a step towards the destruction of Toussaint's power in favour of the English. Toussaint refused to see Colonel Grant, but he continued to allow the American agent to exercise

his functions, and also in a sort of non-committal manner kept up relations with the French. Grant turned to Balcarres, but Balcarres could do nothing, not even give him advice. The governor had enough, more than enough, to do to manage the Colonial Assembly, and thought that perhaps Maitland might help the consul. Everybody leant on Maitland, but even Maitland was at the end of his resources. 'We can no longer maintain the convention,' he wrote; in fact, it was non-existent. We were fairly elbowed out of San Domingo. As for Jamaica, it was in the wildest confusion. A very small force could have captured the island, for the Colonial Assembly had quite lost its head, and there were no forces ready for defence. 'Of course all the blame will be laid on me,' wrote Maitland, 'for having evacuated San Domingo; but surely if there was anything in what the Jamaica men complained of, they might have found time in the last year to have put the island in some sort of readiness for attack.' All the irritation of the man of action against the men of words broke out. As for San Domingo, the scene changed from month to month; every turn of power implying so many men on the other side massacred. Everybody had some share of influence but the English. The situation was as unreal as a nightmare, and Maitland sailed for England beaten and worn out.

He made his way to Cheltenham for August 1799, and then moved back to London, to Berkeley Square.

After barely six months' rest he was again employed; this time in a purely military capacity. He commanded the troops in the expedition to Belleisle in the summer of 1800. 'After eight years of war, after a vast destruction of life, after an expenditure of wealth far exceeding the expenditure of the American war, of the Seven Years' war, of the war of the Austrian Succession, and of the war of the Spanish Succession united, the English army, under Pitt, was the laughing-stock of all Europe. It could not boast of one single brilliant exploit. It had never shown itself on the continent but to be beaten, chased, forced to re-embark, or forced to capitulate. To take some sugar island in the West Indies, to scatter some mob of half-naked Irish peasants, such were the most splendid victories won by the British troops under Pitt's auspices.'

There are some sidelights to this depressing picture which serve to modify its gloom. The vast sums of money here alluded to as if lavished on the British army were spent in subsidizing allies on the Continent of Europe. Outside Europe we captured the entire Colonial Empire of Holland and a good part of that of France: achievements that it is hardly fair to dismiss as the capture 'of some sugar island,' as Macaulay dismisses them. But in respect of our performances on the coast-line of Europe, no language could be too severe.

One of the most ridiculous of all of them was being

projected while Maitland was struggling with a hopeless situation in Philadelphia and San Domingo: this was the expedition to Belleisle. It was entrusted to him immediately on his return from San Domingo. It having been already proven that the civil authorities were in a complete state of bewilderment, there needed only this demonstration of the impotence of the army to fill Maitland's mind with that well-founded contempt for his superiors that runs through his correct and orderly despatches. As a rule, the only person who is fit to write the accounts of battles and sieges is a soldier; but the Belleisle expedition was such a farce that even a civilian may attempt the narration of it without undue temerity.

Belleisle is a considerable islet off the west coast of France, lying due south of Quiberon and between L'Orient and the mouth of the Loire. North-east of Belleisle, between the island and the mainland, lies the little islet of Houat. The object of occupying Belleisle was to give a rallying-point for the disaffected Royalists of the west. The expedition was a repetition of that despatched to Toulon six years before: that expedition against which Maitland himself had railed from his seat in Parliament.

The only chance of success for such an undertaking was that it should be carried out with secrecy and suddenness, and that it should be of overwhelming force. If we had seized and held Belleisle as Sir Charles Stuart had seized and held Minorca only

eighteen months earlier, there might have been a chance for the Royalist cause. We were in correspondence with Georges, who was conspiring in the Bourbon interest, and it was understood that we were to hoist the white flag, and proclaim Monsieur as soon as the fortress was reduced.

Presumably the first point to settle was the strength of the garrison of Belleisle; but this was left to the last, and it was not until Maitland was encamped at Houat that some attempt was made, by interrogating captured fishers and peasants, to find out the strength of the enemy. As regarded secrecy, so little was the expedition kept a secret that we might as well have published our plans in the London *Gazette*, and forwarded a copy to Paris. As a result, the garrison was largely reinforced about a fortnight before the close of our preparations.

Our preparations were conducted with the maximum of publicity and the minimum of expeditiousness. The plan finally adopted was, that one regiment from Portsmouth and one regiment from Plymouth should form the English contribution. They were to sail separately from the Irish regiments, and the whole were to rendezvous off Brest, but so that Maitland and the Irishmen were a little ahead. Apparently there was not sufficient transport available to despatch the Irish regiments at once; so the transport vessels, having landed the first contingent at Houat, were to return to Ireland and bring out the second contingent.

By this ingenious arrangement ten clear days' notice was officially (so to speak) given to the enemy that some hostile enterprise was on foot on the western coast of France. But, as we have seen, their extra-official information was so full that they reinforced the garrison at their leisure.

As regards the strength of the expeditionary force, it was fixed at 4000 men, and Sir Edward Pellew promised to contribute an additional force of 500 marines. This was pure guess-work, and in point of fact, the army was much too weak for the work assigned to it. So far, then, we had made a series of blunders that would have ruined any campaign. Provided, however, that the naval blockade was efficient (and it was thoroughly efficient), there was still a chance that the army might do something if despatched in tolerable order. But the equipment of the troops reminds us of the Duke of Wellington's summing-up of the Flanders expedition five years before—'It has always been a marvel to me how any one of us escaped.'

There was a strong fortress on the island; but it is not clear how the commander-in-chief expected it to be captured, unless he conceived it to be like Jericho of old, and that the walls would fall down at an invitation. For there was no battering train wherewith to silence the enemy's guns; neither were there any scaling ladders; neither were there any fascines. There was not even a light field train in case the

enemy might by chance show fight in the open. Maitland asked for a couple of hundred dragoons for reconnoitring purposes; and dwelt on the fact that there was not a man with the army who knew the island, and that without a reconnaissance now and then he might get into difficulties. But it seems that there was no precedent for the employment of cavalry on such an expedition; and Maitland was given to understand that his request was irregular, and had given offence.

Not only was Maitland expected to reduce a strong fortress without scaling ladders or a battering train, but he was evidently expected to get through his work in the course of an afternoon. 'The Queen's regiment, 450 strong,' he reported, 'has come out without a single tent, canteen or camp kettle.' Presumably they were to use the enemy's quarters and utensils; but Maitland's mind did not run at this heroic pace, and he added simply, 'which renders them perfectly unfit for service.'

With this burlesque army, Maitland sailed from the Cove of Cork on the 18th of May 1800. He made Brest on the 23d, and cruised off Ushant for St Vincent and the Grand Fleet. It was at sea that he discovered the alarming deficiencies of his army; and while communicating with the fleet he also discovered that, though St Vincent was prepared to 'behave in the handsomest manner,' there was a serious deficiency of boats for landing his men. He reached Quiberon

Bay on the 5th of June, and learnt that Belleisle had been strongly reinforced by the French. He now commenced his inquiries into the probable strength of the enemy, and came across the wildest contradictions. Sometimes it was stated as low as 4000 men; sometimes as high as 10,000. Whether this information was intentionally misleading or not, it had the effect of making Maitland pause. 'Supposing,' he said, 'that the French are even 5000 strong,' what would be the use of landing? It might even be a question whether we could land at all, as there was still a total deficiency of flat boats, and a great want of small craft. But to land even 4000 men in the face of 5000 would be the height of rashness: 8000 was the very lowest strength that the invading army ought to be reduced to. This, he said, was a most painful conclusion to come to; but if we were to proceed he must ask for more men, flat boats, some hospital ships, more plentiful provisions, coals, spare stores and camp equipage, as well as scaling ladders, heavy guns and the small force of dragoons that he had previously mentioned. And this is the general's despatch when face to face with his enemy.

On the 14th of June, Colonel (afterwards Sir Miles) Nightingall arrived in London with this despatch, and two days later Mr Dundas wrote to Maitland commending him for his judicious behaviour, and adding, 'It is certainly His Majesty's intention to provide immediately a large corps of troops with a battering

train and every other requisite sufficient for the reduction of Belleisle.' One would not gather from this language that Mr Dundas was addressing the general supposed to be actually engaged on the siege of Belleisle. The Secretary went on to say that affairs in the Mediterranean were critical, that Sir Ralph Abercromby needed an immediate reinforcement of 4000 men, and that Maitland was, in consequence, to despatch his troops to Minorca immediately on receipt of the order. This despatch reached Maitland at noon on the 23d of June, and by four o'clock on the succeeding afternoon the troops were gone; Maitland alone remaining behind.

In the meantime, however, Maitland had twice inspected the island of Belleisle, and had decided that an attack must be made. From his own observation he was convinced that there could not possibly be many troops there: because he could not see them. But is it not a well-known ruse of war to affect weakness in order to draw the enemy on? However, Maitland was eager to make the attempt, and fixed the night of the 19th of June. Fortunately the sea was too rough, and the attack was postponed till the night of the 20th. On the morning of the 20th there came a confidential aide-de-camp from General Georges, conveying positive information that the garrison was 5000 strong, and that every man in the island capable of bearing arms had also been forced into the Republican army. On the 21st of June he wrote to

Huskisson that he supposed Georges must know; but that 'the not making the attempt is a source of bitter mortification.'

After he had despatched his troops to the Mediterranean, he wrote to Dundas that he placed his information at the disposal of the general who would have the next command; but he hoped for that commander's sake that the expedition would be kept quiet until it had started. There would be a difficulty about this, no doubt; 'as the appearance and paraphernalia of a great attack, whatever the risk may be, is a most captivating dose to your old generals.'

On the 18th of June, two days after the despatch commanding Maitland to send his troops to the Mediterranean, Dundas wrote to him to keep them at Houat. Maitland received the despatch on the 26th, two days after the troops had sailed: evidently Dundas had no idea of the pace at which Maitland could drive a piece of work through. The reason for the change of ministerial attitude was the battle of Marengo. It was clear that nothing considerable could now be effected in the Mediterranean; so the 4000 men already at Houat might be used as the nucleus of the next army of Belleisle; an army which Maitland now declared ought not to be less than 10,000 strong. However, they had sailed, and the nucleus was reduced to Maitland and a few light field pieces. Maitland was ordered home early in July 1800. It is not hard to gauge his feelings. He was

a proud, capable, energetic man, and he had been made the figure-head of an expedition that Macaulay justly described as the laughing-stock of Europe.

On the 1st of November 1803, Maitland took the oath as a member of the Board of Control. 'I do faithfully promise and swear that as a Commissioner or Member of the Board for the affairs of India I will give my best advice and assistance for the good government of the British Possessions in the East Indies, and in the due administration of the Revenues of the same according to Law, and will execute the several powers and trusts reposed in me according to the best of my skill and judgment without favour or affection, prejudice or malice to any person whatever. So help me God.'

Castlereagh, Henry Addington and Hawkesbury were Maitland's witnesses to the taking of this oath; upon the subscription of which he was free to enter on the enjoyment of his salary of £1500 a year, and the anxious duties of one of the most complicated pieces of administrative machinery ever devised by man. His tenure of office was not very long, for it only lasted from November 1803 till May 1804. He had left India as a captain in a line Regiment; he was now concerned with its affairs as one of its rulers. But the chief interest to him must have been not so much the remarkable contrast between his own position in 1794 and his position in 1804, as the contemplation of the cumbrous and

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creaking machinery which somehow, and in spite of all collisions, sufficed for the regulation of the affairs of a great empire.

Let us cite as an example the appointment of a commander-in-chief for Madras, which took place while Maitland was on the Board. In our days a single line in the *Gazette* settles this. In Maitland's day H.R.H. the Commander-in-Chief wrote to the President of the Board of Control to the effect that His Majesty had been pleased to approve of the appointment. The president thereupon, without consulting the Board (which was only informed of his action after it was taken), wrote to the Chairman of the Court of Directors of the H.E.I.C., and requested him to move the Court to appoint Sir John Craddock. Thus the Sovereign's pleasure ultimately, and in effect, took the form of a simple request to a commercial body with whom the real authority resided. That request wound its devious way through three separate channels, brushing aside in its course the whole of the Board of Control, and markedly dissociating their authority from that of the chairman. A Sovereign supplicating his own subjects, a Board ignored by their own chairman, a commander-in-chief reduced to a mere ministerial officer, such were the principal features of this ingenious arrangement. The President of the Board was a Cabinet Minister, and therefore resigned with the Government. Formerly none but Privy Councillors could

be members; and as a matter of fact Maitland was sworn of the Privy Council a month after taking his seat. But since the Act of 1793 this was no longer an indispensable qualification.

Yet somehow the arrangement worked, and the Board of Control was looked on at the time as an arrangement exceptionally favourable to the despatch of business and the due control of England's rapidly growing Eastern Empire. After San Domingo and Belleisle, nothing could have been much of a surprise to Maitland. He was a fairly regular attendant at the Board, and if he learnt nothing else, there he at any rate learnt with tolerable fulness 'with how little wisdom the world was governed.'

As the expedition to Belleisle was the last occasion on which Maitland served as a soldier, it may here be convenient to review his military career. Maitland was a military man, but he was no soldier. It is not that he made mistakes; for he always did his work creditably, but his heart was not in the service. He had seen eight years' service in India, in times of peace and in times of stress; and he was not fired by his experience there. On the contrary, he gladly entered civil life, and at once made himself a conspicuous figure. His command in San Domingo was half military and half civil; and in the exceptional circumstances of the case, Maitland might have employed either arm without fear of reprimand. He instinctively negotiated rather than appealed to force. When

active hostilities broke out in Jérémie, he went immediately to the scene of war; but he never looked on the Tiburon expedition as anything but a tedious interruption to what was really of value—his negotiations with Toussaint. If Maitland had been a soldier, it would have been impossible for him to resist the temptation of closing with Toussaint. The expedition to Surinam in 1804, in which his cousin Frederick Maitland was employed, was typical. It was one of many undertaken and successfully carried through about this time, and would certainly have filled the imagination of a man to whom the army was all in all. It was such a complete demonstration of the power of a small force acting with the command of the sea. If we compare Maitland with a contemporary of his—John Moore—we see the difference at once between the born soldier and the merely military man. Moore had not much wider experience of warfare than Maitland; like him, Moore entered Parliament, and at one time, for want of occupation, became something very like a treasonable conspirator. Like Maitland he governed a colony—St Lucia. But whereas in civil life Moore when not ridiculous was quite ineffective, every piece of military work that he did shone with the stamp of genius. Precisely the opposite was the case with Maitland. He did a great deal of military work, and did it as well as, and no better than, a score of his brother officers could have done. But no sooner did he enter civil life than he

was a marked man; as an agitator he was a most formidable antagonist, as a diplomatist he could evolve order out of chaos. He failed in San Domingo only because he was attempting the impossible: he was endeavouring to do, with notes and civil interviews, what nothing but a large armed force could have effected. Even as it was, had the Americans not played for their own hand, he would have effected something. At the moment when he commenced the first piece of work of which England at the present time enjoys the benefits, Maitland was at his best. He was not one of those who develope early, for he was forty-six years of age when he took up his appointment as Governor of Ceylon. For five-and-twenty years he had been incessantly employed in the public service; and his ripe experience was now brought to bear on a most difficult task, one which, it may be safely asserted, nobody but Maitland could have performed. If we would know, in a sentence, exactly in what his work consisted, it amounted to this: to undo as rapidly and as thoroughly as possible the work of his predecessor.

CHAPTER V

CEYLON—ZEAL AND ENERGY—DISASTROUS EFFECTS ON THE COLONY OF CEYLON OF FREDERICK NORTH'S ACTIVITY—IMPENDING RUIN

THE Honourable Frederick North (son of the second Earl of Guilford, and whom he succeeded as fifth Earl on the death of two elder brothers) was a gentleman of a tremulous and exacting conscience, with a fine—even a superfine—taste in the fine arts, an ingratiating manner, large sympathies and many enthusiasms, chiefly of the sentimental kind. Prior to assuming the Governorship of Ceylon, his principal appointment in public life had been the Chief Secretaryship of Corsica, in which position he had earned a reputation for adroitness by his handling of Paoli, and his interview with the Pope. In examining these incidents of his career, however, it becomes clear that in the latter of these there was really very little difficulty, for it was all give on our side and all take on the part of the Holy See. As regards Paoli, it was not so much North's discretion as the threatened court-martialling

of Moore that brought Paoli to reason. We must therefore look on North when he assumed the governorship as, practically, an untried man.

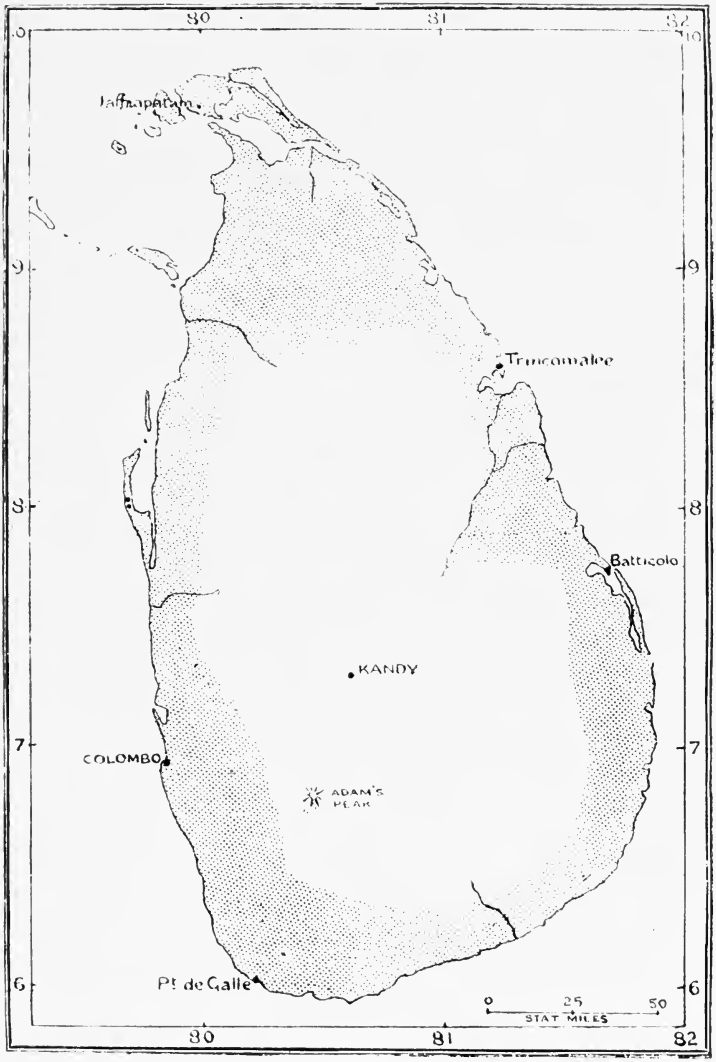
As a governor, we should expect to find him leaning much on the permanent officials, earning a reputation for amiability rather than force. We should expect him to lead an elegant, and as far as possible, a splendid existence, perhaps leaving behind him some valuable monographs on the antiquities of Ceylon. Nobody could have anticipated that he would develop into a zealous and energetic officer of the most pestilent type.

Zeal and energy are such indispensable qualities for a public official that no man can be said to be properly equipped for the public service without them. We have Talleyrand's word for the contrary: and Talleyrand was a great authority. But he served an impatient and irascible master, and conducted the most delicate business in the world at the time when Europe was in a most inflammable mood. We therefore have to justify the phrase 'a zealous and energetic officer of the most pestilent type.' The justification lies in the fact that the words are not here used in the dictionary sense, but in the official sense. In the official sense they are usually employed to describe any piece of work that makes a show, as distinguished from that quiet and unobtrusive devotion to duty that tells in the long run, but makes no show at the time. A man need not necessarily be himself either zealous

or energetic in order to show zeal and energy: it suffices if he makes other people uncomfortable.

As Governor of Ceylon, Frederick North made a stupendous show, and nearly ruined the colony. The Ceylon of a century ago was a very different island from the Ceylon of to-day. The British possessions there consisted only of a narrow ring of territory round the coast, the interior of the island being under the rule of the King of Kandy. Frederick North was the first British governor after the island was captured from the Dutch; and if the Cingalese had been a warlike people, there is no doubt that he would have been the last also. His zeal was all-embracing; it is the more difficult to know which of his blunders to mention first. Perhaps his attempt to alter the fabric of society takes precedence for its curious fatuity and its disastrous results.

The constitution of society throughout the Indian peninsula is now tolerably familiar to most Englishmen from the writings of Sir Henry Maine. It is strictly feudal, but much more rigid than any feudal system of Europe, inasmuch as the distinctions between man and man are enforced by the iron partitions of caste. The basis of the feudal system was that the condition of the tenure of power was the fulfilment of duty. 'Power' means 'land;' 'duty' means 'duty to the State;' the 'State' being an idea inseparable in the East from personal authority. Thus every village has its head—hereditary; its ac-



Map of Ceylon in 1805.

NOTE.—The shaded portion represents that part of the island subject to Great Britain at this date.

countant—hereditary ; its menial officers—hereditary also : and all these officials are paid by lands entailed in their family from generation to generation, and rented directly from the ruler, whoever he may be—Mogul, Maratha, Hollander or Briton. Here we have the lower orders of society, all most jealously kept distinct. Bloody wars have been fought for village headships, so highly were they prized. Above these came a regularly graded aristocracy, all based on the same system—the possession of land and the fulfilment of duties (in the higher ranks mostly military duties) to the State. In peaceful times the duties of the higher grades of this aristocracy were not apparent ; and North accepted the higher ranks as he accepted the nobles of his own land, who also, at that time, enjoyed a magnificent position without any apparent responsibility. But what jarred on his temper was the enjoyment of lands by men calling themselves village servants. Government was in need of money, and here were many thousand acres of land nominally rented from government. With his head full of ideas obtained from works on political economy, North prepared a grand stroke of policy ; he resumed all the lands held for village service, and advertised them for rental. In the open market, he had no doubt he would get much higher prices than those that had previously obtained. But alas ! there was no open market. It scared and displeased the Cingalese to see their time-honoured customs thus

uprooted. It would have been a sacrilege to bid for lands so long consecrated to 'service.' So they lay vacant. With the worst of all obstinacies, the obstinacy of the over-educated man, North persisted blindly in his resolve. Difficulties supervened. The service rendered by these undesirable tenants had not perhaps been adequate; but a certain amount of service had been rendered to government. Now that the village servants had fled, the work that they had performed — letter-carrying between village and village, internal duties in the village itself—remained undone. Nothing daunted, the Governor imported gangs of coolies from 'the coast;' which meant the Madras coast. This cost about £30,000 per annum, and effected nothing. For the coolies well understood and thoroughly respected the feudal system in which they had themselves been reared. They did not like the situation, and they shirked their work. As for the former village servants, they had all fled to the bush. The upper grades of society watched nervously to see who would be attacked next. But North had no attention of attacking anybody: he was only obstinate and unobservant—perhaps it would be more polite to say zealous and energetic — and he turned flightily away from a plan half finished to another with more elements of profit in it—the development of the cinnamon trade.

He wrote the most glowing accounts of what he was going to do with the cinnamon trade. He was

going to cover the expenses of the administration of Ceylon, and put a large surplus into the treasury out of this trade alone. It will be sufficient to mention here that under the contract entered into with the East India Company, it was provided that a servant of the Company should watch the delivery of the goods on the part of his masters : there was, however, no similar provision on the part of the Ceylon Government. We shall see the result of this later.

There was, next, the matter of the Dutch prisoners. Many of these, both officers and men, were in Ceylon, waiting for conveyance home. North had promised them a convoy of English vessels to Batavia—and was waiting for the vessels. Meanwhile he was feeding the Dutch prisoners.

The Governor, with his head full of the profit reaped by so many English countrysides from such large works of internal navigation as the Bridgewater Canal, determined to do for the Cingalese something of the same kind. But the Cingalese, like most Orientals, respected the wisdom of their ancestors more than the wisdom of essays and treatises ; and North's internal communication works were unfavourably received. One of them, near Colombo itself, had the disastrous effect of leaving the capital of Ceylon almost defenceless to attacks which could not formerly have been attempted by a prudent enemy.

To put the crown to his edifice of mismanagement,

North must needs go to war. The King of Kandy was not a warlike sovereign, but he held an admirably strong position in his capital, and he had two doughty generals—Jungle and Fever. The intrepid North ordered his troops to the attack with all the courage of a man who is not going himself. They were disastrously defeated with very severe losses, and one English officer—Major Davie—was left a prisoner in the King's hands.

When Maitland arrived, therefore, the situation that he had to face was this: the English were conquerors in a conquered land, yet their own army was small and dispirited from recent defeat. The native allies and troops in our pay were in hardly disguised mutiny; desertions were frequent, and speculations as to our approaching downfall were generally rife. This was the natural consequence of a miserably unsuccessful campaign. The treasury was empty, and vast leakages in every direction had continually to be stopped by drawing bills on England. Land had gone out of cultivation to a dangerous extent in consequence of the resumption of service lands. Trade was rapidly falling off, and there was a debt of £20,000 due to the East India Company under North's cinnamon contract. The condition of the civil service will be discussed later: it was highly unsatisfactory.

Here was a state of affairs hardly distinguishable from what he had left in San Domingo. But there

were two important differences. Firstly, whereas in San Domingo Maitland had, at first, only a delegated authority for a special purpose, and later no authority at all, in Ceylon he was the undisputed master. Secondly, the natives were not warlike. Except, perhaps, by Raffles in Java, never has finer work been done for the Colonial Empire of England than that which was wrought by Thomas Maitland during the five years of his tenure of office as Governor of Ceylon.

CHAPTER VI

CEYLON—COMMON SENSE—MAITLAND'S RESTORATIVE ACTION—HE WILL NOT BE GOADED INTO WAR —HE REFORMS THE SERVICES

EARLIER in this book, it was stated that Thomas Maitland began life as a totally uneducated man. But life had educated him for the work of life most completely. His work in Ceylon, the repairing of the damage wrought by his erratic predecessor, is the most agreeable period of his career. He had not yet developed that fiercely cynical attitude of mind that he showed in his later years. Ceylon was his first considerable and independent appointment, and Maitland brought to the task his large experience of public affairs, and his profound knowledge of men, applying both in a spirit that was perfectly admirable.

The work was the more difficult because North had been a highly popular governor with the Europeans. To a certain extent he laid himself out for popularity, and multiplied posts in a way that was perhaps hardly justifiable. But apart from

this extravagance, there were excellent reasons why North should be popular. He was a perfect gentleman, and a most agreeable man; and if his government was little more than a succession of wild experiments, the damage fell on the natives, and not on the Europeans.

Maitland landed early in July 1805, and plunged forthwith into his new duties. It took him six months only to patrol his charge, to examine to the bottom every department of public expenditure and revenue, and to draw up a report in which he detailed the whole in 123 folios of manuscript, with 57 enclosures: and as the first net result he was able to report an annual saving of £300,000. The first of the measures by which he effected so vast an improvement was the restoration of the service tenures. Considering that Maitland was writing more than half a century before Sir Henry Maine, it showed exceptional profundity of observation and originality of thought that he should write to the Secretary of State as he did on this subject. We are not, he said, living in the conditions that obtain at home. We are back in the Middle Ages. 'I think your lordship will agree with me upon reflection that it would have been a most strange and unaccountable measure, supposing it possible when we were in this state of society, if one of the ancient barons had pulled out of his pocket Adam Smith, and said, "I will apply to you vassals principles that you do

not understand, and that will not properly apply to your circumstances for another five hundred years."'

It was not, he argued, as if North's system of procuring labour in the open market were a success. There was not a single inhabitant of Ceylon who would work if he were not compelled to do so. 'There is not an inhabitant in this island that would not sit down and starve out the year under the shade of two or three cocoanut trees, the whole of his property and the whole of his subsistence, rather than increase his income and his comforts by his manual labour.'

One very quaint form of tenure he instanced as a remarkable example of the extent to which the custom prevailed of rendering service to government. At Colombo there were 300 or 400 people exempted from all other service on the tenure of 'catching hares in nets for the governor.'

But we are not to suppose that Maitland was as brusque in his handling of so grave a matter as North had been. On the contrary, although it was plain that the service system was the proper one to pursue, he would make no general order for fear of reflecting on North, of whom he always spoke in terms of high personal regard. He simply encouraged, as exceptions, a return to the old system wherever there was a tendency to do so. The tendency was general, and the exceptions rapidly became the prevailing system,

but so that no reflection was cast on 'the honour of His Majesty's service.'

He next, or rather concurrently, turned his attention to the state of the Civil Service and the condition of the different offices. One, in particular, he chose to deal with immediately, because it presented the most flagrant example of the laxness that had grown up under North's government. The collector of Jaffnapatam was a *protégé*, not to say favourite, of North's. He had been rapidly advanced in the service, and although not much over twenty years of age, he held one of the principal collectorates of the island. He was ignorant of the language, and completely in the hands of his sheristadár. The result need hardly be recorded. Justice was sold and government revenues pocketed by the sheristadár and his nominees. Private trade was not then definitely prohibited to civil servants, and the collector traded largely on his own account through the sheristadár. This he did not from motives of greed, but from an excusable wish to do everything that there was to be done. He was a very bad trader, and the only person enriched was the sheristadár. The collectorate, of course, was ruined, and the countryside in dismay. Maitland felt that the case must be dealt with immediately. He sent for the collector and remonstrated with him, but without effect. He sent for him a second time, and the collector almost told him to mind his own business. 'I am sorely tempted to make an example

of him,' Maitland wrote; and he would have been perfectly justified in doing so, for although Maitland's knowledge of men told him that the collector was only a very foolish young gentleman, his proceedings had all the appearance not only of incapacity, but of flagrant dishonesty. But nothing would induce the governor to publicly reprimand a King's officer if he could by any possibility avoid doing so. It was an easy course, he wrote, and the only alternative threw heavy anxiety upon himself; but the alternative course was that which the governor adopted. He promoted the collector from Jaffnapatam to Colombo. Here he had him under his own eye; and he persuaded the collector of Colombo to exchange for Jaffnapatam; how, he does not state, but probably by his talisman, 'The honour of His Majesty's service, sir!'

Thus appearances were saved. But there remained the recovery of the balances due to government from the collector personally and in his official capacity. These balances the governor was by no means disposed to forego; and yet their recovery would necessitate a long and very complicated inquiry. In the ordinary course of the service this would have fallen to the new collector; but Maitland would not hear of that. It would, to begin with, throw a vast deal of extra work on him which he had not bargained for when he consented to the exchange; and it would also in great measure undo the good of the exchange.

So he deprived himself of the services of one of the ablest civilians in the island—Mr Alexander Wood —and placed him on special duty for the inquiry. Thus everybody's sensibilities were spared—at the expense of heavy labour on the part of the governor. But Maitland had not done with the peccant collector yet. He summoned him before Council, and gave him a last chance. By this time the collector had begun to understand what crossing the governor meant. He made his submission, promised to do better, and was dismissed to his work with a reprimand —but not a public reprimand. Maitland immediately interceded for him with the Secretary of State. He was a very young man, he urged, and quite capable of doing good work in the future. He almost made it a personal matter that the young man should be forgiven, and forgiven he was.

At that time the Ceylon Civil Service was recruited from youths of the age of fifteen. They served about twelve years as a rule. Nothing is more certain than that no Englishman is fit to commence arduous work in the East before the age of twenty-two. At twenty-eight and from then for fifteen years onwards he is at his best. The system prevailing when Maitland was governor combined every possible disadvantage. Civilians were useless for the first six years of their service (if they survived them), and were retired just when they were at their best. Maitland wrote about this system with the greatest concern. He always

took the money point of view as being the safest to reason from, and from this point of view the system was simply ruinous. It was only natural, for example, that the men at the head of the service should look for the best appointments. Therefore the younger men were sent to the worse districts. There would be no harm in this if they were already seasoned. But, said Maitland, what happens if you send young gentlemen of fifteen or even of twenty to lonely districts? They either (if they are conscientious) mope and worry over their work, having nobody to speak to; or else (and perhaps that is the best for them in the long run) they get into all sorts of mischief. The effect on the revenue is the same in either case. It is no answer to this to say that they are 'gentlemen,' and will rise to responsibility; character, he urged, is not a thing cut in marble. It varies with circumstances, and may be completely changed by them. It is the same with their physical frames. A seasoned man of thirty will take no harm from a little fever; a boy of eighteen goes down under it. And then what happens to the revenue? We are simply sending out every year a crop of young gentlemen unfit for the work; the service is constantly being recruited with rubbish, and the few who survive are retired as soon as they are of any use. Following out this line of reasoning, he appointed a military man of the rank of major to Batticolo, a district that formerly paid its way, but that recently under the

rule of a succession of boys had turned into a desert. In spite of a direct command, he flatly refused to appoint boys to any such district in future. We may follow up this experiment to the end with advantage. The Secretary disapproved Maitland's appointment, the military man was withdrawn, and the district ceased once more to yield revenue.

These measures are typical; they have been entered into at some length for the purpose of showing that Maitland, far from being the gross bully that he is usually accounted, was in fact a man with an extraordinarily lofty sense of duty, and quite exceptional tact; a strong man in the best sense of the word. There is no more certain sign of a weak judge than the habit of bullying juniors. There is no more certain sign of a weak administration than the habit of finding fault with the lower grades of the service. It shows (to superficial observers) a habit of watching over everything, a sort of omniscience, when the governor concerns himself with the doings of youngsters, and in particular with their shortcomings. But nothing superficial commended itself to Maitland. He knew well enough that the lower ranks of the service are those that give the most trouble; that their attainments must always be inconsiderable, their faults glaringly obvious. But the ideal that he set before himself was a service whose honour was to be most jealously guarded; and before he would injure that honour by a public reprimand to a member of

that service, he would endure any impertinence, any burden of work and anxiety rather than that the English should appear to be divided among themselves in the eyes of the natives. 'Our power,' he said, 'rests solely on their belief in our superiority.'

Into the details of the revenue it is hardly possible to enter here; but the cinnamon contract, an extraordinary example of ineptitude, requires some notice. The officer appointed by the East India Company to supervise the delivery of the cinnamon, in the discharge of his duty to his employers, selected from the bales submitted to him only those which contained cinnamon not only good in quality, but good in appearance. As the contract provided for the appointment of no such officer on the part of the Ceylon Government to check these objections, quantities of cinnamon were rejected that were perfectly up to sample. The storehouses were loaded with the rejected goods, the island was already 5000 bales in arrears, and Maitland could do nothing: for, at the first hint of revising the contract, the Company would of course call upon him to pay up his arrears. So that all he could do was to watch the deficit growing, and suggest that representations should be made by the Secretary of State to the Board of Directors.

The keep of the Dutch prisoners was a serious item of expenditure, their presence was a political danger (for they looked for a revival of the Batavian Republic), and their removal in British ships promised

to be a heavy expense. So Maitland sent a flag of truce to Batavia, which was then in French hands, and suggested that the prisoners should be sent for. They were at once fetched away and landed at Java. Thus, without any outlay except that involved in the voyage of the sloop of war that carried the flag of truce from Colombo to Batavia, the governor rid himself at once of an expense and an anxiety.

The anxiety, though he said little about it, was very well grounded. Our native troops in Ceylon consisted of some Sepoys who were scarcely effective, and more than suspected of disaffection, and some Malays, of whose conduct we can best judge by the following incident. During the war with Kandy they deserted to the enemy and joined in the massacre of our troops. When we retired the Malays marched back to barracks, which they were allowed to re-enter. They then presented a demand for their arrears of pay during the campaign. Seeing that they had been fighting against us, the impudence of this demand has probably never been approached. However, it was acceded to by North's government, and, as Maitland said, we thus put a premium on treason. To awe these very dubious mercenaries we only had 1200 European troops in the whole island, so that to get rid of the Dutch prisoners was more of a relief than Maitland cared to admit.

These were some of his initial difficulties, and perhaps the most serious of them. The surmounting

of them, and still more the manner in which they were surmounted, was of incalculable service to the governor. After the conclusion of the collector of Jaffnapatam's case, Maitland wrote, 'The other officers are already beginning to see that there may be such a thing as the interests of government to be considered.' That was a great step onwards; for it was not so much the actual difficulties of reform that embarrassed Maitland as the spirit of laxness which pervaded the public service. After a warm eulogium of North's personal character, he wrote to Lord Camden, 'I fear that his plans have very generally been formed upon mere theoretic principles without attending to local circumstances or religious prejudices, and I am sure that the execution of those plans has been left totally to themselves.'

It was in the judicial branch of the service that the possible improvements were fewest. By strict supervision the collection of the court fees was enforced, and the courts were made to pay their own way; but that was all that could be done. 'No man will more rejoice than I do that the present unlimited spirit of litigation shall subside into a feeling of equity and honour of which at present the inhabitants are totally divested.' Maitland's grammar was not always very sound, but what he meant was that he looked forward to a subsidence of that spirit of litigation which produced, for example, the following figures. Between the 1st of

March 1805 and the 24th of February 1806, the sitting magistrate of Colombo decided 6812 civil cases. This implies the monstrous number of at least 22 civil disputes for every working day of the year. Between the same dates the criminal cases numbered only 585, or the small total of 11 a week. The whole character of the Cingalese population is given in the figures: they were not violent or turbulent, but they were intensely litigious over small matters, and this temper there was no hope of changing.

Except in Jaffna, where the vagaries of the head of the district had brought about 'a scene of peculation and fraud and iniquity,' the judicial branch of the service needed comparatively little reformation.

It was the revenue that was Maitland's despair; in particular, the survey department. This indispensable adjunct to a well-ordered revenue system in a settled State was simply a white elephant to the disordered revenues of Ceylon as we found it. Without considering that the island could not afford the annual expenditure of £25,000 to £30,000 which the survey entailed, there remained the very plain and cogent facts that village service was indispensable to a survey, and North had abolished village service. The department had been established in consequence of an estimate of the probable progress of the island 'full as ludicrous and full as romantic in its lucubrations as anything that is to be found in the *Arabian Nights*

Entertainments.' Having evolved an imaginary surplus of £50,000 to £100,000 a year, it was decided that £25,000 or £30,000 of this could not be 'better thrown away' than on a survey. 'I wish to God they would have let it alone;' but on the whole he was grateful to it, for it enabled him to demonstrate to His Majesty's Government 'how absurd theoretical speculations are when not combined with local circumstances, local feelings and local prejudice.'

Having done all that was for the moment possible to ameliorate the revenue and judicial branches of the service—those that would naturally attract Maitland first—the governor turned to consider the army and the Kandy war. There was no regular peace with Kandy, but Maitland was not anxious to recommence hostilities. Kandy, he wrote, 'is infinitely beneath contempt; there would be no glory in winning, and there was no dishonour in remaining as we were. It is not the Kandians that are formidable, but Mr North's opinions on the subject that have rendered them formidable. The great fault was, from the commencement, regarding them as a regular power. Had I so considered them, I might have gone to war with them every day since I came here.' The situation was strained, but it gave Maitland the opening for one of those masterpieces of management in which he was such an adept. War was what the King desired; and war was what the governor would not have. Firstly, it was expensive; secondly, it was

risky ; for our army had been beaten once, and the Malays were thoroughly untrustworthy. Yet the King was determined to force on war if possible. He had a hostage in the person of Major Davie, for whose restoration we were negotiating. But the King would not restore him without an embassy ; and an embassy Maitland was too wary to consent to. It would be the final recognition of the King as a regular monarch, and would be merely the prelude to new demands. To break the shock of the refusal, Maitland corrupted the High Priest with the present of a large looking-glass. He also won over the High Steward ; so that when war was debated in the councils of Kandy, a peace party suddenly made its appearance. The decision was put off from day to day ; and meanwhile the High Priest and the High Steward enjoyed the valuable privilege of smuggling letters in to Davie. Each one of these cost Maitland £20 ; but though a miser in the King's interests, the governor never hesitated to be lavish if the occasion justified the expenditure. He even went so far as to offer £2000 to anyone who would bring Major Davie away. 'Money is of no consequence in such a case,' he wrote. But though the bribe was high, the danger of arousing the King's vengeance was too great, and nobody volunteered for this perilous service. The plain fact was that any man who attempted to release Davie would have to spend the rest of his life outside the dominion of the King of Kandy; that is, in effect,

under British protection; and there was still great doubt in the minds of the Cingalese whether British protection was likely to be permanent. So Davie lingered in captivity. But the covert correspondence with him served two purposes: it kept up that unfortunate officer's heart, and it cemented our influence at the court of Kandy. At the expenditure of a few hundred pounds the peace was kept, the breach of which would have cost us scores of thousands of pounds, and more lives than could be estimated. 'War in this climate!' wrote Maitland, with a backward glance, perhaps, at the not dissimilar climate of San Domingo. As for Kandy, the King would always quarrel with whatever power held the coast; so that unless we meant to extinguish him (which we certainly were not strong enough to attempt), our only possible course was to ignore the affronts that he offered us, and to find our consolation in keeping the peace, even if it were rather an ignoble one.

In evolving order out of chaos, in developing a balance out of a deficit, the difficulties that Maitland encountered were too varied and complicated to be enumerated. A few have been instanced, together with the expedients adopted by him to meet them. One source of revenue was the *agio* on the sale of Government bills; and to give some idea of the complexity of these transactions before the days when there was a standard rupee, we may take

this advertisement of the rates of exchange for the 6th of June 1806 :—

On Great Britain £1 Sterling	= 9⅜ Rix Dollars.
On Bengal 360 Arcot Rupees	= 400 Rix Dollars.
On Madras 100 Star Pagodas	= 400 Rix Dollars.
On Bombay 350 Bombay Rupees	= 400 Rix Dollars.

When Maitland had been at work little more than a year, he commenced a masterly review of the value of Ceylon as a military post. We must recall the circumstances that led to our retention of the island. Ceylon was the only portion of the Dutch Empire (the entire area of which had been conquered by England) that we retained at the Peace of Amiens. We made this exception because the campaigns of Suffren had shown us that we could not afford to leave so important an outpost in the hands of so feeble a power as Holland. In his report to the Secretary of State, Maitland reminds the Government of these facts when he is considering the strength—or rather the weakness—of Ceylon. 'Whether at peace or war,' he wrote, the whole objects of the French 'seem to me to be limited to two: to conquer India in England or England in India.' In Maitland's day it was not every politician who saw the situation so clearly.

In this scheme of conquest, where is the place of Ceylon? It stands at the gate of India, and can

only be viewed in relation to the continent. When we say that Ceylon guards India, we mean of course that the fort and harbour of Trincomalee do so. Of the general defence of Ceylon he merely wrote, as of a matter of course, of 'the total neglect that had hitherto been shown to put the island in a decent, far less a formidable, state of defence.' Of Trincomalee itself he reported that its defences stood 'exactly where they did in the year 1781, with this essential difference, however, that the trifling works then in decent order are fast mouldering into decay.' Now Trincomalee is 'the real key by the possession of which alone you can hold the naval superiority of India.' 'So long as we are supreme at sea it does not matter; but directly a hostile squadron with four or five thousand men makes its appearance, we shall lose all that we have paid so much for during so many years.'

In fact, 'if we are not prepared to fortify Trincomalee not only adequately but formidably, we may as well give up Ceylon altogether.'

So much for external defences. As regards the interior, a good deal would be achieved as soon as the Secretary of State should sanction his restoration of the service tenures in the villages. Not much additional military strength would accrue from this measure, but the difficulties of transport, of supply and of internal communication would be minimised. The actual forces at his disposal were quite inadequate,

numbering only 1200 Europeans, with a regiment of Sepoys (who were comparatively harmless), a regiment of Malays (who had been convicted of treason), and both of whom might be warranted to desert to the enemy at the first reverse suffered by our arms.

CHAPTER VII

CEYLON—THE MUTINY AT VELLORE—INTERRUPTION OF MAITLAND'S WORK BY BENTINCK'S INEPTITUDE —MAITLAND RESCUES MADRAS AND LECTURES THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

On the south side of Cavendish Square there stands, looking towards Oxford Street, a heroic statue of a very handsome, very arrogant and (it must be said) very dull man. It is that of the second son of the third Duke of Portland—Lord William Bentinck.

Lord William Bentinck's dulness was perfectly compatible with lofty intentions and great personal nobility of character, but it was not to be denied. It was of the aggressively British type. He always acted as if he really believed that the British Constitution came down from heaven; as if it was not only metaphorically but actually a palladium of liberties; and not only of our liberties, but of the liberties of all other peoples. If facts did not square with the British Constitution, so much the worse for the facts.

He passed a public life of many years in making experiments on these lines; experiments that were often

made with kindly intentions but were (with a single exception) of disastrous effect. The exception was the abolition of Sati ; which earned for him an epic of panegyric, and a statue in Cavendish Square. With his blunders we need not concern ourselves, except with the first, which nearly lost us India. In his capacity as Governor of Madras, while Maitland was Governor of Ceylon, he ordered the native soldiers to parade without their caste-marks ; as if that was not enough, he ordered them to shave in a particular fashion ; as if that was not enough, he ordered them to wear a cap of a particular shape resembling a European head-dress. Short of outraging their private life and defiling their temples, there was nothing else that he could do to stir up a bloody rebellion. His own defence is such an excellent *résumé* of the situation that we may spare a line for it. He said that he had signed the orders as he understood them to be mere matters of form concerning the military department only. As if, in the East, matters of form were not often of vastly greater moment than matters of fact. As regards the defence that they concerned the military department only, this demonstrates that Bentinck had failed to learn his first lesson, viz., that religion in the East pervades all departments of life, and can by no means be set aside at the call of military expediency.

Of course the inevitable happened. The abominable orders were no sooner published than English

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officers were shot down, a universal massacre seemed imminent, and the fabric of our dominion trembled to its foundation. Of course Maitland was sent for. On the 3d of August 1806, a swift vessel was despatched to Ceylon for help. Beating against the south-west monsoon, it took ten days on the voyage. It reached Maitland at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 13th, and at six o'clock all the men that he could spare were already embarked. The orders to Colonel Buchan were to proceed to Negapatam without a moment's delay. The men, numbering 400 in all, were in a vessel that, running before the wind, made their destination in three days. Maitland wasted no words in sending them, and offered no comments. He only asked to have them sent back to him as soon as possible, as Ceylon was now defended by the navy only. The Governor of Madras in council overflowed with gratitude, as well he might. But Maitland preserved a grim silence, receiving and annotating reports, making all possible inquiries, and never hesitating all the while to render every assistance in his power to the panic-stricken Government of Madras, to whom he offered no advice, simply accepting their report on the situation, and acting on it with a promptitude and loyalty that could not be surpassed. Then he sat down ; and, the immediate danger being past, and most of the facts in his possession, he wrote : but not to Bentinck, to Minto, the new Governor-General. Maitland was boiling with rage.

Of what use was it that he should be working himself to death to set matters straight in Ceylon after North's vagaries, if another, a more violent and headstrong North, was to set the continent of India in a blaze with his folly? Ceylon was only useful as an outpost to India, and if Lord William Bentinck's conduct was a sample of the course we were about to pursue there, there would very soon be no such thing as British India. Tact, tact, tact; this was the text of Maitland's daily sermon to the service. Study life, study men; above all the men around you here in the East and as they are. Learn local manners, local customs, local habits, local religions, local prejudices. Not till you are at home in all these can you venture to move, still less to alter what is around you. But here was a governor who was prepared to throw the East and all her hoary traditions and notions into a bonfire, and for what? For a question of stocks and shakoes.

As for their measures taken after the mutiny, Maitland was beside himself with impatience. 'The Madras Government,' he wrote, 'are giving out orders, stating what every child and driveller knows to be false—that they have perfect confidence in their Sepoy establishment at the very moment they are sending to me to say that they have none.'

After his first outbursts Maitland settled down into a detailed examination of the system of Indian administration, and of some incidents of the mutiny.

There had been an attempt to connect the outbreak with the ambition of Tipu's family, who were living rather magnificently at Vellore on their allowances from the British Government of £30,000 per annum. Maitland dismissed these rumours without much attention. Even if there was anything in them, that is no great discovery. 'It is not in the nature or feeling of a Mahommedan to hang up his sword and sit quietly down to cultivate the land.' It is one of the standing difficulties of Indian government to deal with this temper. It was not on this head, but on the feeble and complicated system of Indian administration that Maitland now addressed Minto. 'It is a system,' he wrote, of 'perfect inefficiency and imbecility.' Every ensign thinks himself a commander-in-chief; every writer talks as if he were the head of a government. They all write far too much, spending hours of time and reams of paper over matters that could easily be settled in an interview of ten minutes. Very different, he writes, is my government. Here you shall see no piles of records, and stacks of correspondence and accounts: there is nothing to be seen in Ceylon but results.

It is not as if all members of the service were efficient: there are plenty of 'idle, assuming and indolent coxcombs' who are pushed into places where they can do nothing but harm to the service.

The mutiny is not of course owing to these shortcomings. But if we do not set our house in

order, there will some day come another mutiny with which we shall not be able to cope unless our system is altered. The outbreak at Vellore has been a terrible warning. Let us not neglect it; you cannot quiet mutinies with proclamations announcing that you have full confidence in the Sepoy establishment.

So wrote Maitland to Minto; the Governor of Ceylon to the Governor-General of India. There was no official connection between the two officers. They had sat in the same Parliament, and may be presumed to have been acquainted. But let us for a moment imagine the reverse situation. Let us suppose that it was Maitland's system that was being remarked on, and that Minto was the critic. It is easy enough to imagine the fury with which he would have received any criticism, especially one unasked for, especially one of such vehemence; above all, a criticism from an officer who, though not actually a subordinate, held a post of far inferior importance to his own. It would have been different if Maitland's communication had been private or semi-official. Yet, although he must have known perfectly well, at the time when he was lecturing the Governor-General on the proper method of conducting the administration of India, that he was taking a step that was of very questionable manners, to say the least of it, he afterwards expressed his astonishment that any offence should have been taken at his expression of opinion. Offence was

taken, dire offence : the sting of Maitland's comments being, of course, that they were perfectly sound.

We shall best realise the situation if we imagine the same or similar occurrences to have taken place during the great mutiny of fifty years later. Surely in such a time of stress a small, or even a considerable, breach of official etiquette would have given rise to very little comment. The Vellore mutiny happened so long ago that most of us have forgotten the very name of the place where it originated, and where, fortunately for India, it was stamped out. But at the time there is no doubt that it shook our confidence most seriously. Maitland evidently thought that any catastrophe might be expected, either in India or in Ceylon. Within the limits of his own charge, there were practically no troops to be depended on. To any man, and especially to so strenuous a worker as the governor, it is exasperating to lose one's life for another man's blunder. It was under the conviction that no less a danger than this stared him in the face that Maitland wrote. His feelings were intensified by the genuine zeal that he always showed for the King's service ; and though right may technically have been with his enemies, and though the result of this and some other incidents was to make Maitland one of the best-hated men of the day, there is no doubt that his conduct (at this distance of time) looks admirable. The happy instinct of compromise—the absence of which has often been the ruin of administra-

tions more logical than our own—prevailed on this occasion. No reply was sent to Maitland; no official notice was taken of his action. It was allowed to reach him privately that his language had given offence, and the matter dropped. Both Bentinck and the commander-in-chief in Madras were recalled from their posts. Bentinck's family influence, at once territorial and parliamentary, was far too important for his blunder to count for much, although it would have ruined the career of a less influential person. He continued his public career, the career of a kind-hearted, energetic man untaught by experience and apparently unteachable; and there has gathered around his name a halo of reverence and admiration.

Before we quit the incident of the mutiny of Vellore, there are one or two gems from Maitland's correspondence on the subject that ought to be preserved. A week after writing his first despatch, he wrote again to Minto (28th September 1806). He repeated his opinions previously expressed; and added that the measures taken by the Madras Government were 'farcical and unsatisfactory.' It was 'obvious to every child' that the palace and the Sepoys were pulling together, and though that was not the worst of the business, it was absurd to issue proclamations denying it. 'The Vellore business,' he concluded, with an attempt at cheerfulness, was 'a severe paroxysm of a violent disorder, but it is nothing but a paroxysm.'

The remedies adopted, however, were a miserable quackery; the real remedy must be radical. 'The whole system of India must be considered by His Majesty's Government. The whole of its military system completely revised and corrected, a due proportion established between the Europeans and the Sepoy establishment,' etc. This is fairly strong advice to a Governor-General of India. But it is very mild language compared to that which he used privately. To Sir George Shee he wrote on the 23d of March 1807, that the Madras Government had cherished the causes of the mutiny 'by a degree of folly, imbecility and madness unequalled even in the history of the Island of Ceylon.' This is no longer advice; it is castigation, not to say abuse. If such was the language that he allowed himself to use in writing, we may guess what he said in conversation. Here we may finally quit the story of the mutiny at Vellore: a miserable episode, in which Maitland bore himself with admirable courage, loyalty and promptitude. He also succeeded in making a host of enemies for himself—chiefly those whom he had rescued from the consequences of their own folly.

CHAPTER VIII

CEYLON — INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION — QUARREL WITH THE CHIEF JUSTICE—VICTORY OF MAITLAND

THE system to which we of Europe have habituated ourselves of strictly dividing the executive, judicial and legislative duties of government is a strange system in the eyes of Easterns. To them it is natural that the King shall make or alter laws, and shall also execute them by the hand of servants holding office at his goodwill. To deprive him definitely of the power of executing his own laws is already a derogation of his dignity; while the intrusion of a judge on the Sovereign's sphere of action is nothing more nor less than a challenge to his royal authority. If not checked immediately, it simply amounts to rebellion; their allegiance is at once divided, and they await the inevitable appeal to armed force more or less resignedly, according to their temper.

Nevertheless, there has been no hesitation on our part to carry out in the East what must always be the English ideal of a sound system of government.

But it is none the less the part of a loyal judicial officer to see that the authority of the governor is unchallenged, so that there can be no room for doubt as to who is the real head of the government. Especially was this attitude on the part of the judicial bench a desirable one in Maitland's day, when we consider the perilously uncertain state of the society over which he was called to rule.

Mr Lushington was Chief Justice of Ceylon. He had a seat in council, which was exceptional for the Chief Justice ; and the authority of his high position was thus considerably enhanced. Mr North had dealt gently with the Europeans ; and though not in very good odour with the army, he was much considered by the other English in the colony. He was a very easy-going man to deal with, and Lushington's consequence rose, as the consequence of a very consequential man will always do, unless his chief is really a strong administrator. This is a moderate way of stating the situation. Maitland stated it rather more vigorously. 'When I came to the island,' he wrote, 'all general authority was annihilated,' and Lushington was as great a man as the governor. He proposed to continue his former habits, and frequently called on Maitland, and gave him advice about the proper method of conducting the military arrangements of the island. The new governor, as we have seen, had but little time to spare for academic debates ; but he was far too wary to commence his term of office with a

breach with the Chief Justice. 'Nothing could be so mischievous in a government like this as any public difference between the two branches of the public service.' According to this opinion, so often expressed by Maitland, and so often enjoined by him on his own subordinates, when the time came for him to be heckled himself he bore his punishment unmoved; but not without secret resentment.

The earlier part of his term as governor was filled with anxious work, and Lushington had things his own way. But gradually the state of public affairs quieted down; the Civil Service came into line and the deficit disappeared, and its place was taken by a surplus. The native army, if untouched, fell into a better frame of mind as it saw the steady improvement in British affairs, and the grip that the new governor had acquired over his subordinates. There was no more talk of the British Ráj coming to an end; and Maitland, having broken his unruly team into something like shape, had leisure to attend to his own affairs, and prepared himself to face the Chief Justice if a conflict was to that officer's mind.

Lushington was no match for Maitland at this kind of work. He seems to have supposed that because the governor, a full major-general, patiently submitted to be lectured on his military duties by a lawyer, therefore he might be neglected altogether,

and that any liberty might be taken with him. He continued, therefore, his habit of laying down the law on every subject, little guessing what a terrible antagonist he was challenging. Maitland was silently waiting until Lushington should take up ground that was obviously untenable before closing with him. Many causes of difference arose, but Maitland passed them by, either because they were not precisely the opportunity that he desired, or because his hands were full in other directions. At last Lushington committed himself; and before the quarrel was over the Chief Justice was beaten, and driven not only from council, but from Ceylon, and the governor's authority completely rehabilitated.

It was the duty of the Chief Secretary to Government to countersign orders by the governor. But sometimes the governor went on tour, and it might be inconvenient to take the Chief Secretary away from headquarters; or the Chief Secretary might be sick. In either of these cases, what was to be done? Would the signature of the Deputy Secretary suffice? This was the question duly submitted to the Chief Justice for his official opinion. It was the kind of question that the Chief Justice delighted in. He enlarged on the separate responsibility of the two officers at great length; and finally (on the parallel of the Sovereign of England) decided that no act of the governor was valid that was not countersigned by the Chief Secretary. Maitland protested against this

view, partly on the ground of the extreme inconvenience that would result to the public service if it were acted on, and partly because of the extravagance of the parallel between a colonial governor and his Sovereign. Apart from the indecency of such a parallel (and Maitland expressed himself as greatly shocked by it), there remained this plain distinction: that the constitutional maxim of England was that the King could do no wrong, and it was therefore necessary that some minister should be in each case pointed out as the responsible officer. In a colony the case was totally different. The governor was responsible in his own department, and the Secretary in his; but in countersigning governmental orders the Secretary did not relieve the governor of any share of his responsibility. His function was simply that of a witness; and for that purpose the Deputy's signature was equally good with that of his chief. These sober and weighty reasonings told to a certain extent with Lushington, and he gave, in full council, a hesitating assent to them.

A test case soon arose. The governor went on tour and took the Deputy Secretary with him. He exercised his prerogative of pardon, and the Deputy countersigned the order. From the bench of the High Court the Chief Justice refused to allow the order for the prisoner's release to be executed. Here was a challenge thrown down to the governor in

the face of the whole population of the island. If the governor might not exercise his prerogative of mercy without the permission of the Chief Justice (and that is the only way in which the natives could possibly have interpreted the difference between the two officers), it was clear that the Chief Justice was the greater man. Maitland took up the challenge, and reminded Lushington of his opinion expressed in council that the Deputy's signature sufficed. Lushington discriminated: his opinion in council, he explained, had been delivered in his capacity as a Member of Council; his opinion from the bench was delivered as Chief Justice. Inasmuch as his rank as Chief Justice was higher than his rank as a Member of Council, his opinion delivered in the higher capacity necessarily overrode the other. It is hard to say whether he really believed this nonsense; but there is no doubt whatever that if his explanation had been accepted it would have left the natives in no dubious frame of mind: the governor would have been reduced in their minds to a figure-head, and Lushington would have stood out as the real if secret depository of power.

Maitland had chosen his ground admirably. There was no dispute as to the propriety of the pardon. It was the case of a man condemned to one year's imprisonment for a civil debt; and as he had a family depending on him and there were openings for his work, it was a clear case where an exercise of the

prerogative of mercy was to the advantage of the colony. Consequently even those who disliked the governor, or whose tempers inclined them to the adoption of Lushington's view of the question, were compelled to admit that, even supposing right to be on the side of the Chief Justice, expediency was clearly on that of the governor. A council was called and the Chief Justice invited to attend. He declined; having, he said, nothing to add. If he supposed that this would be a checkmate to Maitland, he was greatly mistaken. An order was immediately issued dispensing with the further attendance of the Chief Justice at council. It was added that His Excellency had no use for Mr Lushington in military affairs, that his opinion would always be of utility in legal matters; but that, as he had declined to give it, his conduct could not be passed over. This return blow was decisive of the relative importance of the governor and the Chief Justice. For the public the question was settled; but privately the quarrel was only beginning. It commenced at fever pitch and did not subside until Lushington left the island. The two officers assaulted each other with long reports and memoranda, detailed examinations of the interviews and even reflections as the manner in which various interviews were conducted, or remarks made. The dispute went worse and worse for Lushington; he lost his temper, and his style grew more and more peevish and even abusive. Maitland swelled with importance. His

language grew grander and grander. Whatever his private conversation may have been, no one bore himself, officially, with more stateliness than Maitland. He was dignity and propriety personified. Very different was it with Lushington, who was reduced at last to such a state of mind that the governor could complain with good show of reason that he was 'daily and hourly insulted by the Chief Justice.' There could only be one issue to such a situation. There was but one Maitland, but the English Bar could produce a dozen Lushingtons at a moment's notice. The Chief Justice was consoled with an appointment in England, and Maitland reigned supreme.

It has been necessary to enter into the details of this long-forgotten quarrel, because it was one of several in which Maitland engaged, and in consequence of which he came to be denounced as a quarrelsome man. This is a most damaging reputation for a public servant, and if it were accurate it would go far to justify the neglect with which Maitland's name has been treated. Charles Napier called him a 'rough old despot.' 'Rough' he was sometimes; although, if occasion called for self-suppression, he could be as patient as Marlborough. 'Old' he came to be as men counted age in those days—sixty-five. But if Napier meant 'despot' to be a term of detraction, he was mistaken in applying the word to Maitland. For it so happened that his

whole public service was passed in situations where nothing could have been achieved if Maitland had not made himself as near an approach to a despot as the British Constitution admits of. It would have been a derogation of his duty to 'the King's service' if he had allowed his authority to be disputed, either in Ceylon or afterwards in the Mediterranean.

But there is this much truth in the charge that Maitland was quarrelsome. Undoubtedly he reduced quarrelling to a fine art. He chose his ground with infinite patience and discrimination; and being once entered on his quarrel he threw his whole soul into it. He had an admirable gift of exposition, a perfect mastery of all the arts by which his enemy might be put in the wrong. He always represented himself as the embodiment of governmental interest, and showed up his opponent as the satanic hinderer of the King's profit. To Maitland a quarrel, when once determined on, was simply a piece of work to be turned out as finely as all his other work. It is no more than the barest justice to say that he avoided quarrels as far as possible, and that he escaped from countless disagreeable situations where other officers, less keenly mindful of the King's service, would have allowed quarrels to be fastened on them. But it is also only fair to admit that he thoroughly enjoyed quarrelling wherever the King's service would admit of the indulgence. So long as things were going badly, there was no man more long-suffering and

patient than Thomas Maitland; but when smooth water had been reached it was time for those who had put affronts on him to be wary. Lushington and one or two other men neglected this precaution.

CHAPTER IX

CEYLON—CONCLUSION OF HIS TERM—HE IS CALLED A 'PAGAN'—MR WILBERFORCE URGES LORD CASTLEREAGH TO REBUKE THE GOVERNOR—CASTLEREAGH'S COLDNESS—THE MUTINY AT SERINGAPATAM—MACKINTOSH'S ESTIMATE OF MAITLAND'S WORK

The sanguine belief that the light of the Gospel had but to be shed on the darkness of India for all her people to quit the errors of their ways and enter the Church was, at this period, very generally prevalent in England. Since Maitland's day some progress has, perhaps, been made. But we begin to realise, too, how painfully slow must be any general process of conversion. Hinduism has room in her large pantheon for all the creeds of Christendom; Islam is militant and relentless as ever, though perhaps for the moment less authoritative. The light, indeed, has shined; but the people have not followed in the way that it points them. Perhaps our Asiatic fellow-subjects may retort that we have not shown them a very good example. But however all that may be, the grand distinction between then and now remains

—that in Maitland's day the people of England were keenly intent on the spread of the Gospel, whereas now we may be said to be of a somewhat more deferential mind towards the creeds of the East. We even, sometimes, remind ourselves that Christianity itself is, in its origin, one of the creeds of the East. Maitland held these views—or something like them. Very advanced views they were for those days. If we followed the quaint fashion of revolutionary times, and gave him a double nickname to symbolise his character by allusions, ancient and modern, we might perhaps call him Erastus-Gallio. Firm in his own faith, he yet had a horror of thrusting it on other people. If we inquire what faith was his, we may describe it as a sort of Georgian Catholicism. His critics in England called him a pagan—for shortness perhaps. 'If showing proper respect for their feelings when I visit their temples is to be a pagan, I am one,' he rejoined. But we can measure the depth of the resentment that was roused in England by this attitude on the part of a British governor by the anxious haste with which Lord Castlereagh responded to a prompting from William Wilberforce. Wilberforce's informants were the missionaries—respectable authorities, no doubt. But their view—that 200,000 eager catechumens had been deprived, by a stroke of Maitland's pen, of all means of learning the truths of the Gospel—was not sound. Wilberforce no doubt acted rightly in reporting their view to Castlereagh. He would

have done better to have awaited the minister's reply before concluding that Maitland was the monster of wickedness that he assumed him to be. But the temper in which he sought to remedy matters is well set forth in the following extract from his diary, 'We are to save only about £1500 by what is the moral and religious ruin of the island. O Lord, how deeply do we provoke Thy resentment! Yet have mercy on us, and spare us, much as we deserve punishment. I have had some intercourse with Lord Castlereagh about it.'

This extract reveals a state of mind that one would rather leave veiled than pry into. Nevertheless, as the attack on Maitland was made, it is only just to him to examine in what temper it was made. Here we have it. Wilberforce saw nothing incongruous in mixing up the £1500 and the interview with Lord Castlereagh with his own expression of profound self-abasement, and prayer that the Divine wrath might be averted. It is not with a view of dwelling on this incongruity that this passage from his diary is cited. His language was in accordance with the religious feelings of his school and his day, and was perfectly honest and genuine.

The points on which it is submitted that Maitland was right and Wilberforce wrong are two. The first is the quiet assumption that Maitland's reported action would be the 'moral and religious ruin of the island.' Surely Christians are not the only moral and

religious people on the face of the globe. Secondly, Wilberforce was praying for pardon for a crime which, as a matter of fact, had not been committed. Castlereagh was clearly somewhat inclined to this opinion, for Wilberforce, in reporting his interview to a friend, wrote, 'You cannot conceive (yes, you can, on reflection) how cool Lord Castlereagh was about the schools.'

In reply to Castlereagh, Maitland remarked that he had presented, out of his own pocket, the most expensive service of communion plate that could be ordered, and evidently considered that he could not be called on for any further display of religious zeal. But he reported constrainedly, adding, 'If a man must speak of such things.' Evidently the whole subject gave him pain. Not so much because of the suspicion of himself that was implied, as on account of the distastefulness of making such a subject the matter of official inquiry. There was quite as much of religious feeling in Maitland's attitude as in Wilberforce's, although his harsh style makes one as uncomfortable as Wilberforce's exaltation. It is hardly to be denied that Maitland's conduct was the highest wisdom, and that the zeal of Wilberforce was not according to knowledge. The abstention of the civil arm from any intrusion on the sacred ground of religious belief is one of the surest supports of British domination. Forcible religious conversion may succeed; in fact has succeeded; but only at the

expense of degrading the converts and crippling their country. But it more often fails, and when it fails it leaves behind it the seeds of a hatred that endures longer than that induced by any other course of human action. There was, however, one direction in which Maitland decided that a certain amount of pressure was justifiable. It was no part of the Buddhist faith that its priests should be dependent on the authority of the High Priest at Kandy; and it was politically inconvenient that they should feel themselves to be so. He did not scruple, therefore, to bind the Buddhist priests in our dominions to our interests, rather than allow them to become the nominees of Kandy. So much interference was justifiable and useful, but in all religious matters he moved very reluctantly, and only after long pondering and with many precautions. The Dutch had insisted on candidates for public office professing the Reformed Faith, so numerous conversions took place. But Maitland was sceptical as to their thoroughness. He observed that in courts of law, when a man professed himself a Christian, and took the oath according to the Christian form, the other party always insisted on the Christian repeating the oath in Buddhist form, and the Christian never refused. From this he drew the inference that neither party thought the Christian oath binding, which would not be the case if conversions were generally believed to have been for conscience's sake.

After the resignation of Lushington, and his withdrawal from Ceylon, there only occurred one event of importance during Maitland's tenure of office: this was the mutiny at Seringapatam. Before dealing with this, however, we may with profit note the very remarkable progress that the governor had made in his internal administration, in spite of interruption from outside, and obstruction where he might have looked for support. From the outset he had set himself to work to balance the accounts, and to accumulate, if possible, a surplus. Maitland held that no government was entirely successful unless it could point to a surplus. Considering the frightful confusion of the finances of the island when Maitland took over charge, the accumulation of a surplus may well have been held to be an impossibility. Some very short mention has already been made of the measures that Maitland took to stop the leakage of public money and to develop the resources of the island. Undoubtedly the measure that produced the greatest results was the infusion, by means of his own personal influence, of a new spirit into the civil service. Private trade was strictly forbidden to civil servants. It was further intimated to them that very strict accounts would be demanded from them in the future. These accounts, especially when followed by a personal visit by the governor, were a very different affair from the loose audit that had been enforced by Maitland's predecessor. Almost all the officers were

involved; some of them deeply involved. Two of them—Mylius, a Dutchman, and Kirbey, an Englishman—committed suicide rather than survive to see their accounts inspected. The loss to government in the second case was not much under £20,000; but with time the greater part of this sum was recovered.

Private trade being forbidden, the governor had no hesitation in saying that the service was now underpaid. His own expenses of installation, which he only partly recovered, had amounted to £7000. Although a poor man, he lived lavishly; and though a miser in the public service he disapproved of misers in private life. One officer, who was eligible for promotion, he deliberately passed over on the ground that he was excessively greedy of money. Precisely for these reasons he insisted that the service ought to be well-paid—much better paid than it was. An easy existence, he said, was indispensable to a man if he was to do heavy work in the East. If the services felt his hand somewhat heavily in the matter of private trade and public money, there is no room for blaming the governor on that head; for the system that preceded his own was fatally easy-going; and where their just interests were affected he rigorously championed their cause.

The effect of five years of this work was seen when the mutiny at Seringapatam broke out. The mutiny at Vellore had tested the government of Ceylon severely. It struck Maitland's work, so to

speak, between wind and water; he himself had very grave doubts whether it would not end in our losing Ceylon altogether. But the mutiny at Seringapatam three years later found him in a much stronger position; and although the actual danger was more serious than on the occasion of the mutiny at Vellore, the governor expressed no anxiety about the state of his own charge, and denuded Ceylon of European troops in order to support the Madras Government without fear and without hesitation.

The mutiny on this occasion was that of the European officers, not of the native troops. It was occasioned by a measure of economy advised by Lord William Bentinck, and carried out by Sir George Barlow, his successor. Bentinck and Barlow were two of the bravest blunderers that have ever been employed in the Indian services. Bentinck was a soldier; Barlow was a civilian. Bentinck had the excuse (if it is an excuse and not an aggravation) of being ignorant of local conditions. Barlow had no excuse at all. He was a civilian who had been created, for long and distinguished services, a baronet. He had been also created a K.B. as some compensation for not succeeding Lord Cornwallis as governor-general. His whole life had been spent in India, and he was therefore perfectly aware of the risks that he was running, in treating the Madras army with a mixture of insolence and contempt that no troops, not the meekest in the world, could be expected to endure

with patience. The risk, as he very well knew, was that he might break down the fabric of British rule. He ran that risk, and when he had set the whole Presidency in a flame, he applied to Maitland for help. Maitland was quite accustomed to this by now. He sent off his European troops at six hours' notice, and abstained, on this occasion, from comments which were as clearly useless to the Madras Government (since no attention was paid to them) as they were damaging to himself. But he allowed himself to make some comments to the Secretary of State. 'They are making a mess of things on the coast,' he wrote. 'Barlow shows great personal courage, but he looks at nothing but measures, and never considers men.' As to the source of the troubles, it was simply 'a complete jumble of all the authorities in one mass.' Of course the East India Company's officers have done plenty of good work, but there is 'a total want of every well-regulated principle of military subordination' in their army. When the mutiny was suppressed, he wrote, 'they have got well out of a scrape,' but Lord Minto's measures left the situation 'dangerous, insecure and uncomfortable to a degree beyond conception.' The Madras Government continually issues soothing resolutions, but everybody knows that jealousy, discord and dissatisfaction abound. But nothing will induce him to interfere again.

It was shortly after the mutiny at Seringapatam

that Maitland received Lord Liverpool's sanction to a measure that he had long advocated—the settlement of Ceylon by Europeans. Nothing else, Maitland had said for years past, would be of any avail. The natives had no capital, and if they came to accumulate it, they would still lack the energy to develope the island. Accordingly, after long delay, permission was given to him to allow Europeans to take up land for cultivation, but so that no single settler held more than four thousand acres. This was Maitland's last considerable piece of work for Ceylon. In the autumn of 1810 he had a violent attack of seasonal fever, with rather dangerous complications. As he had served for more than five years continuously, he now begged to be relieved of his charge. He was advised that it would be a serious matter for him to risk another hot weather in Ceylon. At this time, almost immediately before the governor's departure, Sir James Mackintosh was travelling in the island. He has left on record his estimate of Maitland's work which we may profitably consider,—

'It is impossible for me to do justice to General Maitland's most excellent administration, which I am convinced never had an equal in India. By the cheerful decision of his character, and by his perfect knowledge of men, he has become universally popular amidst severe retrenchments. In an island where there was in one year a deficit of £700,000, he has reduced the expenses to the level of the revenue, and

with his small army of five thousand men he has *twice in the same year* given effectual aid to the great government of Madras which has an army of seventy thousand.'

We need not be carried away by this opinion, for Maitland was just the kind of man to strike Mackintosh's imagination. 'I cannot learn the game of life,' he once sadly confessed of himself. Now the 'game of life' was one in which Maitland was unapproachable. No man played it with such consummate success. Mackintosh's admiration would at once be compelled by the career of such a man. But if his own career was somewhat spoilt by his indolence and his preference of observation to action, these very faults—if faults they were—made him the more valuable critic of another man's work. We must not forget that Maitland and Mackintosh were old allies, for Mackintosh had been the secretary to the Society of the Friends of the People, of which Maitland had been a founder. But we must also not forget Mackintosh's judicial habit of mind, his keen observation, and the uprightness of his character. On the whole we may accept without misgiving this tribute to Maitland's work. He found the Civil Service corrupt and inefficient; he left it purged from corruption and as efficient as a service can be expected to be that is recruited with boys of fifteen. He found a mountain of debt, which he paid off, and vast leakages of expenditure, which he stopped. He found scandalous

profits being made in every direction, one example of which will suffice. The victualling contractors of the navy gave up £30,000 a year rather than relinquish their contract. These profits he could not always deal with directly, owing to the divided authority of of the Army, the Navy and the Company; but he did much to frighten the peculators.

He found vast tracts of country uncultivated; he brought them back to cultivation. He found the whole fabric of native society dislocated; he restored it. He found war with Kandy impending. At the expense of a few pounds sterling and a few toys he kept it off for five years. 'My relations with Kandy are precisely the same as they were when I took office,' he wrote, with just pride. He found the restoration of the Batavian Republic being not obscurely plotted; he got rid of the conspirators. He found the judicial authority openly lording it over the executive. By an admirable combination of patience and defiance he routed the Chief Justice and drove him out of the island. He found the native armies on the verge of rebellion; they never ventured to rebel, not even when the island was denuded of European troops. He twice saved Southern India from the consequence of the mischievous folly of two successive governors.

These are not startling or impressive achievements, and they have all been forgotten. They are all in the realm of pure administration. They were

achieved by the governor himself acquiring an intimate knowledge of every trifling detail of the service; by his determination to put up with any inconvenience, any affront even, so long as the King was best served by his governor showing tact and patience. But when the time for patience was past, he bore down obstruction and insubordination with a resolution that was nothing short of ferocity. His labours in Ceylon are now totally forgotten; but he was soon to be employed on a task, one part of which (like his work in Ceylon) remains to this day, and one part of which has been swept away. In connection with this task, which filled the last twelve years of his life, his name is still faintly remembered, but remembered more on account of his personal defects and eccentricities than for the excellence of the fabric that he reared. How far we have been just in this judgment we shall be able to decide when we have examined Maitland's work in the Mediterranean.

CHAPTER X

MALTA—ANCIENT AND MODERN RIVALRIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN—THE ROUTE TO THE EAST—THE PLAGUE—AN ATMOSPHERE OF ARSENIC AND BRIMSTONE — QUARREL WITH THE DOCTORS; THEY ARE ROUTED — QUARREL WITH THE ADMIRAL—SUCCESS OF MAITLAND'S MEASURES

On the historic stage of the Mediterranean all the nations of the old world have at different times sought to play parts; some have striven to play leading parts, and a few have succeeded in doing so. Future historians will probably single out two great rivalries for the mastery of the inland sea: in the ancient world the rivalry of Rome and Carthage, and in the modern world the rivalry of England and France. Carthage, a commercial and colonising power, sought to make herself mistress of the Mediterranean and failed. If we enquire why she failed, we shall find that it was not so much Rome who defeated Hannibal as the Carthaginian Senate. Quite different is the case with the great modern rivalry. France—marked out (to all appearance) by nature as the dominant power in

the Mediterranean—has failed to secure the undisputed position that she would seem to desire, for the reason that her schemes of domination were royal or ministerial schemes, and lacked the driving force that is supplied by the backing of the popular will. If we inquire, on the other hand, why England is at the present moment playing a leading part in the Mediterranean, we shall find that it is not so much the genius of her admirals or the prowess of her soldiers, as the impulse of the British nation that has projected English influence from the Pillars of Hercules to Alexandria.

A vague conclusion of this kind is most unsatisfactory unless borne out by abundance of evidence. The evidence is there. All through the second half of the seventeenth and the whole of the eighteenth century we are incessantly confronted with the same situation. A point of vantage is gained in the Mediterranean, and forthwith the Cabinet sets to work to trade away the post. Sometimes the ministry goes so far as to face Parliament with their proposals; and in the Commons those proposals are invariably received not only with uneasiness but with determined opposition. More often, when a hint of their intentions has been allowed to escape as a sort of feeler, the temper of the country has answered the mute question in so unmistakable a manner, that the Cabinet has incontinently dropped the subject: to agitate it was to precipitate their own fall.

Of all the places that we have at different times held along the waterway, none has been so frequently a subject for angry discussion in our own days as Gibraltar. The 'immorality' of holding it has been as often insisted on as the inexpediency. Just at present there seems to be a tacit consent to drop the question of its surrender. Far other was the state of mind of the successive ministries of England throughout the eighteenth century. Gibraltar was expensive; it was useless, being a mere 'barren rock'; it constantly embroiled us with Spain; it aroused the jealousy of France. We can count no fewer than six determined attempts to get rid of it. These attempts took the form, now of a royal promise, now of a ministerial undertaking; but they never attained to a more definite shape, for the Commons of England forbade it. There was very little attempt at reason; the debates were mere menace and declamation. This determined, if unreasoning, attitude of mind attained to a remarkable pitch of exaltation directly England acquired a second post in the Mediterranean. Gibraltar was 'the brightest gem in the Crown of England'; but if we condense this nebulous phrase it comes merely to this, that Gibraltar is necessary as a support for Minorca. Minorca, on the other hand, was 'indispensable to the honour and security of our country.' But this, upon examination, turns out to be merely a paraphrase of the conclusion that Minorca is necessary as a support for Gibraltar. When Minorca

fell, the whole nation was stirred to its depths. It was not, as some have held, a few 'raucous jingoes' who called for Byng's blood; it was the entire population of the United Kingdom: they must have blood for this dishonour. The people fell into that state of mind (so rare with Englishmen) which is exactly described by the phrase that our neighbours so often employ in moments of disaster—*Nous sommes trahis.*

Very different was the language of the nation about a West Indian island, or an Indian or African settlement. When there was a question of any such loss or gain, the ministry clearly understood what their course should be: they would have to deal with the Africa House, with the 'West Indian interest,' or with Leadenhall Street. Outside this little ring of commercial interests, there was but small agitation; and none that any ministry was afraid to face, if not with rhetoric, then with stolid composure. But to touch the Mediterranean was to awaken the curiosity and anxiety of the constituencies. It profits nothing to rail at this temper. The only course that is open to a statesman face to face with such an exhibition is to accept it as the index of a nation's destiny. It cannot be turned aside; it cannot be defied; still less can it be reasoned with, for it hardly pretends to be rational; it is hardly more and nothing less than an obstinate resolve.

We are accustomed to speak of 'the Mediterranean Route to the East,' and we constantly reason as if

there would be no talk of our holding the Mediterranean if we did not happen to hold India. So that, if only it could be made clear that there were several alternative, and even preferable, routes to the East, opposition to our withdrawal from the Mediterranean would subside. History does not lead us to any such facile conclusion. On the contrary, history tells us that long before the phrase 'the Mediterranean Route to the East' was dreamed of, long before men thought of the great waterway except as an ocean inlet where we might have some trifling trade interests, the mind of England was doggedly set upon securing for her fleets the domination of the Mediterranean. It was not till the close of the eighteenth century that France, by invading the East, showed us what the use of the Mediterranean was. Even then the demonstration was incomplete. No less a man than Mr Pitt brushed it aside. That expression, indeed, falls short of explaining his state of mind on the subject. To brush a view aside, a man must at any rate take some notice of the view submitted to him. Mr Pitt took no notice of it at all. He simply ignored the whole question of the Mediterranean considered as a route. He estimated the amount of our annual trade with the Smyrna ports, contrasted it with our trade with Jamaica or Calcutta, and concluded that it was nought. The deduction was obvious: we must retire at once from all our conquests, so as to avoid giving umbrage to France. So Mr Pitt was

only one more, if the most illustrious, in the long line of British statesmen who have done their best to keep us out of the Mediterranean, or to uproot our influence there when once it was founded. Nevertheless, at the Great Peace, the Mediterranean was more than potentially an English lake. In order to understand Maitland's difficulties on taking over his new charge, we shall have to examine, as briefly as possible, the series of events that led up to this singular situation.

They all fall into shape round Napoleon's three attempts to dominate the route. It was hotly contended at the time that Napoleon was a harmless and even a benevolent monarch, who meant no manner of damage to England, if we had not given him provocation. So much of history has been unravelled in the course of the last hundred years that it is perhaps unnecessary to refute that proposition. There is now no doubt that, as Maitland put it, the object of France was to conquer England in India, or to conquer India in England. This is a curious anticipation of Napoleon's own phrase, 'I will reconquer Pondicherry on the shores of the Vistula.'

The three attempts were preceded by the expulsion of the English in the year that Maitland sailed for San Domingo. Next year came the Egyptian expedition, which was intended to extend French influence through Egypt to India. The chief events of this war (which closed at the Peace of Amiens)

as regards England in the Mediterranean were the Battle of the Nile, the occupation of Minorca, the capture of Malta, and Baird's march through the desert. The net result was that, instead of French influence being extended through Egypt to India, it was, on the contrary, England that was drawn from India to Egypt and permanently encamped at Malta.

After 1802 there followed a sort of interregnum, composed of a short peace and a time of intense anxiety for England, during the whole of which period Napoleon was rapidly pushing on his preparations for conquering India in England. This period closes with Trafalgar. It was now plainly impossible for France to effect anything material where a great fleet was necessary. Napoleon instantly turned to his alternative scheme, which was that of surrounding the Continent of Europe with a ring fence of tariffs, the object of which was to ruin the commerce of England. This period began with Austerlitz. The Emperor's first thought was for the Mediterranean. '*La dynastie de Naples a cessé de régner*' was among his earliest proclamations from Schönbrunn. His brother Joseph mounted the vacant throne, and Napoleon's second attempt to dominate the route was made. This was to be compassed by thrusting his arm down the peninsula of Italy, and throwing the English right and left. The English answer to this was the occupation of Sicily. 'Lose not a moment in seizing Sicily,' he

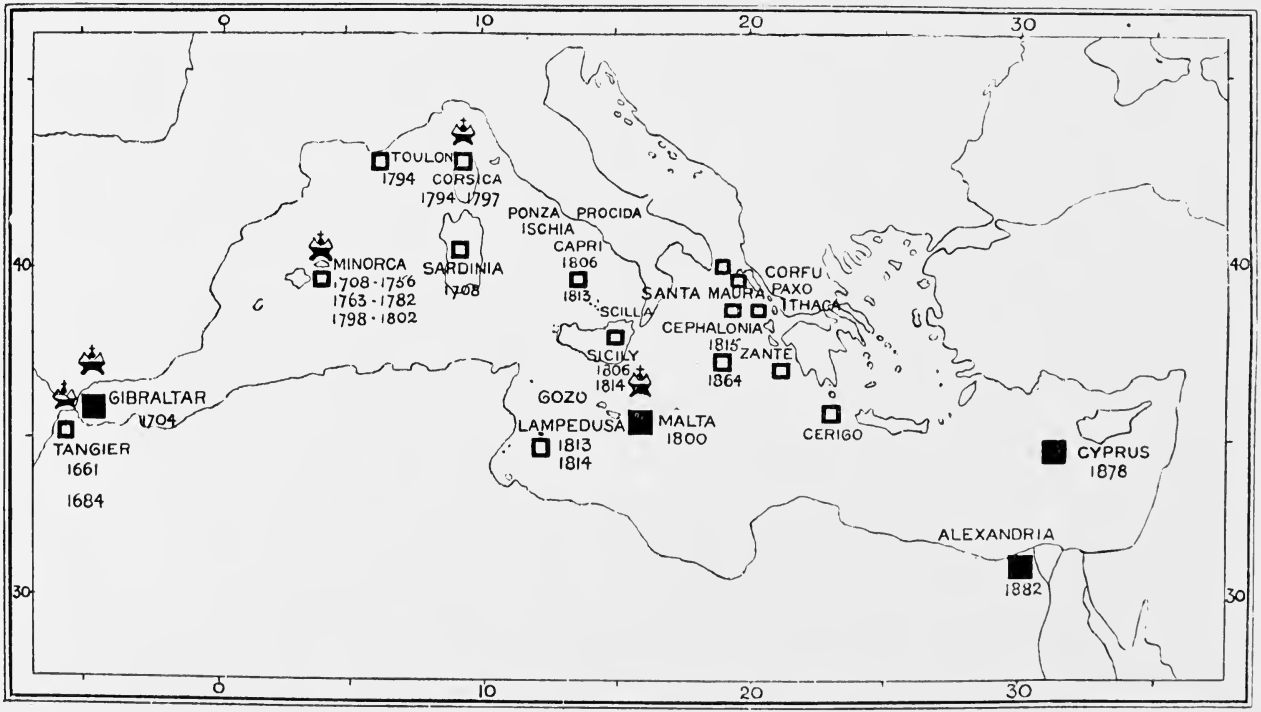
commanded King Joseph immediately after the crown had been conferred on him: then, later, 'I will never make peace without having Sicily.'

But Sicily was an island, and to seize an island without a fleet was beyond even Napoleon's power. The second attempt to control the route simply ended in a very great enhancement of the power of England. So long as France had only to defend her own shores, her fleet was adequate to the task. But by extending the frontiers of France throughout the whole length of the double coast line of Italy, the Emperor gave us an opportunity of fastening our fangs into the body of the empire—an opportunity that we gleefully embraced. We could not be shaken off; and from the moment of its foundation the French kingdom of Naples was slowly bleeding to death. It was not so much the famous battle of Maida that effected this, as our minor expeditions. Maida was, in effect, an insignificant combat; although, in a way, a forerunner of Waterloo. It had a prodigious vogue at the time and earned for Sir John Stuart the dignity of a Neapolitan count, and the grandiose title 'The Hero of the Plains of Maida.' But Maida was only an incident. Our army was insignificant, but our navy was all-powerful; and wherever a little seaport garrison flew the flag of imperial France, there, in due time, descended an English expedition, superior in force, and resting on the fleet. When a superior French force was marched overland to oust

us we quietly retired, having caused the enemy vast expense and anxiety at no cost whatever to ourselves. In this way we occupied Capri, Procida, Ischia, Ponza and Ventotiene among other places. For the French the situation was hardly endurable: for the English it was a mere series of holiday excursions. This state of things lasted from the date of the occupation of Vienna by Napoleon down to the date of the Treaty of Tilsit. A secret article in this treaty gave the Emperor his third and last chance of dominating the Mediterranean route, for it provided for the cession of the Ionian Islands by Russia to France.

The French were unable to move a single regiment from one port of the Mediterranean to another. But they could, and did, march a mighty army across Europe, and wring this great concession from Alexander at the point of the sword. This is hardly a more remarkable fact than that Russia should have islands in the Mediterranean in her gift. By what astounding chances the Ionian Isles fell under Russian domination will be examined when we come to consider the work of the first British Lord High Commissioner there. At present we have only to observe that the object of the secret article was to secure for France a point of vantage in the Mediterranean, as a support for the French kingdom of Naples, and a set-off to Malta. The annexation of Corfu and the dependent islands formed the third attempt of Napoleon to dominate the route to India; or perhaps, we should

MAP OF THE MEDITERRANEAN, ILLUSTRATING THE GROWTH OF BRITISH INFLUENCE, 1661—1897.



■ Position now occupied by British forces. ◻ Position formerly occupied by British forces. Position annexed to British Crown.

NOTE.—Positions in Italy occupied and relinquished between 1806 and 1813 are not all inserted here.

say, to modify so far as possible the complete control of it that had now been acquired by England. It is hardly necessary to point out that he was foredoomed to failure. If his fleet could not protect Naples, or conquer Sicily, how much less could it maintain the dominion of France in seven little islands that could be cut off and reduced one by one. On our side, if harrying the coasts of Naples was so easy as hardly to be called active service, still less was the reduction of the Ionian Islands to be reckoned among the considerable achievements of the British fleet. The islands fell, one after the other, almost without resistance, and at the Great Peace were handed over to England under exceptional and burdensome conditions. But outwardly, and to the uninstructed eye, 1815 found us in complete mastery of the Mediterranean from end to end. Malta was ours, the Ionian Islands were ours, except with reservations that were often not taken seriously. Minorca was only not ours because we did not choose to keep it. 'Minorca is ours whenever we like to take it,' Nelson had written, and accordingly we had handed it back to Spain. We even occupied Lampedusa, a little island about one hundred and fifty miles from the coast of Africa. Some importance was attached at the time to the possession of this little rock. It certainly appeared on the map as if it were a formidable support to Malta, the two islands together completely blocking the waterway. Through Corfu we commanded the

Adriatic; Gibraltar, the impregnable rock, closed the Straits. For years we had occupied Sicily; and it was well understood that the Neapolitan Bourbons owed their restored throne to England and to England alone. Egypt we had occupied, and handed back to the Porte in the name of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. This was the result of the century-long struggle to get us out of the Mediterranean. The chief features of the struggle were the extreme jealousy of our presence there that had always been shown by France, and the nervous eagerness of successive British Cabinets to show every consideration for that jealousy. This situation reached its highest pitch of development at the Peace of Amiens, when, in spite of the French having (in the Egyptian expedition) shown us their hand in the openest manner, even Mr Pitt acquiesced in the retirement from all our conquests, thus leaving the way open for a second dash on the East on the part of France. On this occasion, as on so many earlier occasions, it was the dogged determination of the British people that defeated at one and the same time France and the British Cabinet. The resolve to hold on to Malta provoked the second and third attempts of Napoleon to break the chain of our communications, and resulted in England securing the complete and exclusive domination of the Mediterranean from end to end.

Exactly fifty years after Maitland entered on his work in the Mediterranean the old spirit of retiring

at any cost flared up again in England. On this occasion it so far commended itself to the British people as to produce the most famous surrender of modern times — that of the Ionian Islands. This surrender was made by way of a concession to the sensibilities of the Greeks; just as, throughout the eighteenth century, the surrender of Gibraltar was continually designed by way of a concession to the feelings of the Spaniards. In such matters England is not supposed to have any sensibilities; or, at least, her Cabinets do not encourage her to indulge them. But in 1813, when Maitland assumed the Governorship of Malta, there was no longer any talk of this kind to be heard. He stepped on to this stage in the eyes of all the world as the visible embodiment of the mastery of the Mediterranean by England. That mastery had been won after fifteen years of incessant fighting, and it was clearly understood that he was sent there to maintain it. The obscure colonial governor was now to pit his brains against the astutest intriguer of Europe— we shall see with what success, and how events justified his attitude. These quasi-external embarrassments gave him more anxiety than the current difficulties of his administration; but these latter were weightier by far than any that he had hitherto been called upon to face. In San Domingo and the United States he had been set to weave ropes of sand; but though the situation weighed

heavily upon him, an untried man, the issues were not really momentous. His work in Ceylon was as fine as could be; but the stage was small and obscure. In the Mediterranean he was the centre of a world of plots and intrigues, of baffled ambitions and clamorous hopes. It was here that he earned for himself the nickname King Tom—the offspring of affectionate admiration and marvelling hatred.

He landed at Valetta on the 3d of October 1813, and assumed the government on the 5th. The plague was raging. 'We breathe very much through a medium of arsenic and brimstone at present,' he wrote, 'but I am told, when I get accustomed to it, it will be quite delicious.' The physical atmosphere he was prepared to accept, under protest; but the moral atmosphere he was determined to alter forthwith. It was Maitland's fate to find his authority uncertain wherever he went. In San Domingo he had none; in Ceylon he must needs rest content to share it with Lushington until he could find time to deal with him; in Malta he was expected to be the humble servant of the doctors. He sent for them, one by one, and asked of each, 'What is the plague?' 'How can you tell whether a given disease is plague or not?' As there was no possible answer to either of these questions that could be regarded as satisfactory, the governor gave the faculty to understand that, under the circumstances, he con-

sidered that he knew as much as they did, and that he therefore proposed to resume the reins of government. 'Nothing can be more absurd,' he wrote, 'than to suppose that any medical man is a bit better judge than any other member of the community how the plague is to be stopped.' 'The whole of the cure consists in two things: care and separation—the rest is nonsense'—including, perhaps, the arsenic and brimstone.

Certainly the measures of the medical men had not been remarkable for wisdom. They commenced with the establishment, here and there, of pest-houses, combined, as Maitland wrote, with so little care to prevent the spread of infection that the only wonder was that the plague had even partially subsided. The governor's first measure was to abolish the pest-houses — which turned the whole island into one vast hospital—and establish a lazzaretto island. The principal measure, he wrote over and over again, is to isolate the case, and this is a step that has very little dependence on medicine and its professors. Careful to guard himself from the appearance of arbitrary dealing, he quoted the conduct of the government to which we had succeeded—that of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem. Far from leaving the subject of 'sanità' to the doctors, they would not even leave it to the Grand Master, but jealously reserved it for a committee of Grand Crosses. The committee sent for the doctors once a week and

gave them instructions, but unless they were asked for their advice they were never permitted to give it, or to take any steps on their own initiative. Perhaps in revenge for being so long and strictly held in, they claimed such powers from the British that Sir Hildebrand Oakes (Maitland's predecessor) had to put his foot down so as to avoid losing the reins of government altogether, whereupon they all resigned their posts on the Medical Board, 'the most fortunate event that could have taken place,' commented Maitland. 'If the plague gets a fresh start' (he wrote), 'I shall have to put the island under martial law.' Not that this strong measure would make much difference, for at the moment of writing the infected villages were all surrounded with cordons of troops who were under orders to fire on anyone attempting to pass them. But at the end of a month's work he still had to write, 'the plague is the most teasing of all things,' not only for itself, but because it isolates the island and stops trade. 'The plague decreases, but the deficit rolls up.' Sicily was continually writing to him for bullion, but he could only reply that Sicily and Malta were, in that respect, in the same boat, 'and all we can do is to scramble on the best way we can.'

Sicily, at this time, was more or less in the hands of Lord William Bentinck, the British Plenipotentiary at the Court of Palermo. Bentinck sent an agonised

appeal to Maitland to lend him some troops. The collection of revenues, he wrote, could only be enforced by the military; and Sicily was threatened with confusion and anarchy. If that were the case, it was Bentinck's own fault, for he had exercised almost unbounded authority in the island, and if he could only have abstained from meddling in what he did not understand, the term of his embassy might have been looked back on by the Sicilians as a truly Saturnian reign. As it was, his statement was a very great exaggeration of the actual facts. But Bentinck was still the Bentinck of Vellore. As for sending troops to his assistance, however, Maitland was in no position to do anything of the kind. He had only 3200 men under his own command, and was so tied hand and foot by the plague that (as he wrote to Sir Henry Bunbury on the 28th December 1813) he had not even touched his instructions. It was impossible to do anything but look after the plague and keep the island quiet.

In the midst of his troubles, Admiral Langhorne arrived from Gibraltar with three men on board suffering from yellow fever. He proposed to land them, but Maitland would not allow it. The admiral urged that his fleet might become infected, and Maitland said that he would deeply grieve if that should occur. But, he added, the people of the Mediterranean are infinitely more afraid of the yellow fever than they are of the plague. If it once got about that the yellow

fever had been in Malta, the island would be quarantined for God knows how long, 'which would have the most fatal consequences; for we are already in positive want, and we should then have a famine in addition to our other comforts.' It was a very serious situation for the admiral, however, and there is little to wonder at in his insisting, with some irritation, that his invalids should be allowed to land. But Maitland had enough troubles on his own shoulders without taking Admiral Langhorne's as well; and even though the admiral grew disagreeably (although, from his point of view, perhaps justifiably) heated over the dispute, Maitland would not budge. His perseverance was rewarded. By July 1814 he was able to report that every vestige of the plague had disappeared from Malta, although at Smyrna they were dying at the rate of 1000 a day, and at Alexandria at the rate of 500 a day. The disease was raging all over Greece, and even in Tunis. The last case of the plague in Valetta was on the 20th of October 1813, in the lazaretto of Valetta on the 31st of January 1814, in the lazaretto of Curmi on the 7th of March 1814, and in Gozo on the 11th June 1814. Nevertheless, Sicily refused *pratique* as late as February 1815 for a very curious reason. Not on account of any real dread of infection; because, as Maitland wrote, 'Never was plague so little concealed or so thoroughly stamped out.' Nor was it because the Sicilian Government was particularly unfriendly

towards us; but simply because the smuggling trade paid the merchants of Sicily (English merchants mostly, we regret to record) so well that the profits gave them the wherewithal to bribe the Sicilian sanità to refuse *pratique*.

Maitland did not, however, wait for the plague to subside before he addressed himself to his instructions. As soon as it was fairly on the way to extinction he commenced his report to Lord Bathurst on the state of the island. Many changes would have to be made, but in the forefront of his action he placed this recorded conviction, 'To make a change beneficial we must at all times look not only at the thing itself, but at the temper with which it is received.' This conviction it was that marked Maitland off from the Norths and the Bentincks. It was because he acted in this spirit that he was able to effect so much with so little friction. Personal animosities he might and did arouse; but he could afford to despise them, because his measures were sound, and because he always looked 'not only at the thing itself, but at the temper with which it was received.' He had need of all his tact to deal with the unique and highly complicated situation that he was called upon to face in Malta.

CHAPTER XI

MALTA—INTERNAL AFFAIRS—THE BARBARY STATES SANCTUARY—AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SEE—LAW REFORMS—THE UNIVERSITÀ—THE HOSPITAL

OVER all Maltese business there brooded two most menacing tempers, that of the ecclesiastical power, and the popular temper induced by the ecclesiastical power. The two questions that Maitland must needs deal with at once were, the Right of Sanctuary, and the Church of St John of Jerusalem. Formerly the right of sanctuary had been insisted on in all cases. Then it was given up, except in cases of murder and treason; but an affidavit was always required to the effect that the accused should not be tried by the civil arm until he had been found guilty by the Bishop's Court. The difficulty here was that from the Bishop's Court an appeal lay to Rome; so that there was no finality of jurisdiction in the island. On this point Maitland made himself clear at once. There could be no question of any appeal outside the island except to the Sovereign. Moreover, if he found that sanctuary interfered with the administration of justice, he should not hesitate to abolish it

altogether. That he might offend the people was possible; but the first indispensable condition of a well-ordered State being a sound judicial system, he should not hesitate in such a matter to face popular discontent. With these preliminary remarks to the archdeacon, he then announced his willingness to make any reasonable compromise. He had no objection, he said, to an appeal to the bishop and two assessors. The archdeacon assured the governor that the bishop's authority would not be found to be an obstruction to the course of justice. 'I am inclined to agree with him,' commented Maitland grimly. Then with that cynical frankness that was rapidly growing to be his habit, he added, to the Secretary of State, 'I have little doubt that an arrangement could be made on this head, carrying into effect every substantive purpose of justice, and reducing the Bishop's Court and the Court of Assessors to a mere nonentity.' The question was very early raised on a side issue, and in a manner that would have entrapped any man less wary.

On the 1st of January 1814, a Te Deum for the subsidence of the plague was ordered to be sung in the Church of St John of Jerusalem. The Te Deum was ordered by proclamation, and the bishop immediately wrote and inquired whether His Excellency proposed to attend. His Excellency was a heretic, and might have pleaded lack of grace, but he foresaw that though he might, in this manner, glide out of the

present embarrassment, he would be laying up a crop of difficulties in the future. He therefore announced his intention of being present. The bishop then inquired whether the governor would occupy the throne. Now the throne of the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta was placed on the north side of the high altar, and, by special licence from His Holiness, it was within the altar rails. To occupy it would be, in a measure, to admit the very authority which—in the matter of the Courts of Law—Maitland was disputing. To leave it unoccupied would be an admission that some part, at any rate, of the authority of the Grand Master was lacking to his successor. In the eyes of the people the inference would be obvious, and the governor would lose no inconsiderable amount of prestige. Nevertheless, with a fine expression of modesty, Maitland said that, as he could not himself pretend to a licence from the Holy See, it would be quite improper for him to sit within the altar rails, and he should occupy a smaller throne immediately outside them. In that case, said the bishop, perhaps the bishop had better occupy the throne. Not at all, returned Maitland ; the throne was for the Sovereign ; that much was perfectly established from long usage. Now the Sovereign was absent in England, he, Maitland, being merely the Sovereign's deputy. The proper course, therefore, was for the Royal Arms to occupy the throne, while the bishop would sit opposite to the governor, on the other side of the altar.

Thus dexterously, and by a complete surprise, did Maitland evade a situation fraught with a distinct and public menace to his authority. It was impossible for anyone to take offence, for he had conducted the delicate negotiation from first to last in a humble and diffident manner. Although he had deposed the bishop from the first place to the third in this and all succeeding gorgeous functions, he had not taken the first place himself, and had throughout consulted nothing but the dignity of his master. To cavil at his decision would be merely disloyal.

The next question that he had to decide was that of church accommodation for the garrison. It had been suggested to him either to take the Church of St John for this purpose, or else the disused Church of the Jesuits. In such matters, as we have already seen, Maitland moved most reluctantly. An order, he said, he would obey, but he prayed the Secretary to consider how hardly the population of Malta would take either of these steps. Accommodation must be provided without a doubt, but let us provide it, if it can by any possibility be managed, without disturbing, not to say deeply wounding, the feelings of the people.

His alternative was ready, and, though expensive, he nevertheless urged it, in spite of the pangs that spending public money always cost him. The alternative was the enlargement of the palace chapel. To his great relief the Secretary approved of his sug-

gestion, and the Roman Catholic churches were left untouched.

He returned at once to the reform of the judicial system, and submitted a draft of regulations for a new commercial court, of which the ninth clause must be quoted *verbatim*, so eloquent is it of the state of things that Maitland was dealing with. 'All private applications relative to depending causes, whether of professional men or of suitors to the judges or consuls, shall be prohibited under the following penalties, namely, that the professional men be degraded from their profession, and be deemed incapable of serving in any court in this island and its dependencies. The party to the cause, whether plaintiff or defendant, shall undergo a penalty of one-half of the amount in dispute.'

Extraordinary as this clause appears, it was the only way of dealing with the prevailing system under which every cause was iniquitously settled, so to speak, 'in chambers,' chambers of bribery and corruption. The open trial in court which took place subsequently was a mere piece of dull play-acting, unless by signs in court the party forejudged could induce the judge to alter his decision. In this case the proceedings, although still the very reverse of judicial, rapidly became the reverse of dull; violent imprecations and menaces being hurled at the bench, and by the bench returned with interest. Thus, until Maitland's arrival, the only check on a general system of judicial oppres-

sion had been the judge's fear of personal violence at the hands of the defeated party. His codes were drawn up under unique difficulties. 'There is not even a Common Law Book here,' he wrote. The Maltese could give him no help, nor did they wish to do so; and Tyers and Laing, his principal English assistants, were equally helpless. Laing was Chief Secretary, and made a very good Chief Secretary. But he was no lawyer, and was, as a matter of fact, in Holy Orders. Some legal assistance was provided by the appointment of Mr Wright; but of him Maitland wrote, 'I wish Mr Wright had never made his appearance. He will make a constitution, civil or criminal, in any given time; but he does not study local conditions. He wants to overset the whole law of the island; a mighty easy way of saving himself trouble. It enhances his consequence—which is the only thing he attends to.' Nevertheless 'I think it will succeed,' he wrote to Bunbury, 'but I long to hear what Lord Bathurst says.'

He interrupted this important work for a few days in order to visit Lampedusa, where we were still keeping up a garrison at considerable expense. He was reminded of our occupation of Lampedusa by Lord William Bentinck writing to him that Sicily was about to put in a claim for Malta in the approaching settlement of Europe. If this were to be conceded, it would become important to know whether anything could be made of the smaller island. Lord Castle-

reagh's instructions to Bentinck at this juncture were to recognise the French kingdom of Naples, provided that Murat, on his part, would recognise Ferdinand (formerly King of the two Sicilies) as King of Sicily, and provided that we could find Ferdinand some consolation for the loss of the Kingdom of Naples. Perhaps Malta was to have been the consolation; it would not have been an unreasonable request from the Sicilian point of view. But Ferdinand need not have been alarmed, for Bentinck, to put it plainly, disobeyed Castlereagh. He did, it is true, betake himself to Murat's headquarters, but he presented himself to the King ostentatiously (and, under the circumstances, one must say, most offensively) wearing the violet cockade of the Neapolitan Bourbons. Far from recognising Murat as King of Naples, he would not even recognise him as a King, and addressed him as Monseigneur. In fact, he entered on his negotiation with the evident intention of making it fail, as it immediately did. But Maitland knew nothing of all this. He received Bentinck's note in the middle of April 1814; a month later he was back in Malta, having reviewed the defences and resources of Lampedusa, and made up his mind that it could never be of the slightest use to England. By proclamation dated exactly four months later, he withdrew all our troops and stores from the island, and announced that there would be no further connection between Malta and Lampedusa. There was, it should

be noted, no natural connection between the two, for the island was owned by a Neapolitan Prince who took his title from it, but who lived very modestly (after the fashion of a good many great people in those days), and was cheerfully contented to increase his income by leasing the rock to a successful man of business.

The governor could now no longer avoid dealing with the 'Università,' 'the most difficult and complicated point connected with the island.' It would be fairer to say that he now, for the first time, found a little leisure to grapple with this knotty question. The Università was not a corporate body entrusted with the education of youth, as we should infer from its resemblance to the English word; it was a board charged with the duty of purveying food for the consumption of the Maltese. It was also 'the most troublesome dunghill of corruption I ever met with;' and nothing was more certain than that we should never recover one shilling of its deficit, so ingeniously were its accounts kept. Seventy thousand quarters of wheat were annually required for the maintenance of the island. It was the most considerable outgoing of the Maltese treasury, and made the government a great merchant. Needless to say, vast leakages occurred over every transaction. 'I have seen a good deal of corruption in the West Indies and in the East,' wrote Maitland, 'but nothing like what I find in Malta.' It was not only that the corn contract offered bound-

less opportunities for fraud: it was that the Maltese, having grown accustomed to be fed at the public expense, now considered that all supplies ought to be furnished by the government—even ice. All this involved inquiries of a 'most irksome and distressing nature.' The first point to determine was the quality of the different grains. There was a very precarious supply to be obtained from the African coast, and an abundant supply (but of the worst corn in the Mediterranean) from Egypt. The best supply, the most constant supply of grain of good quality, came from the Black Sea; Taganrog corn being preferable to Odessa. This much determined, he despatched Richard Plasket, who had been with him in Ceylon, to Constantinople with £30,000 to effect the necessary purchases, to dismiss both the rival agents in the Levant, collect outstanding debts, and order the various officers of Malta to send in their accounts immediately. He then turned to the Università itself; and here, as elsewhere, he made bad things serve good ends. In the confusion of the preceding fifteen years one member of the Board had obtained a complete ascendancy over all the others in the external affairs of the Board. He had used his power corruptly, and was now dead, having wrought as much confusion as possible. He was an Englishman, however; and Maitland gladly made a precedent out of the state of things that the Board had allowed to grow customary. He appointed an Englishman to

succeed Livingston, confirming him formally in the powers that Livingston had usurped, and thus effected a radical change under the cloak of following a precedent. With one responsible Englishman in Malta, and one responsible Englishman as agent in the Levant, that control which government had long lost over this most important item of expenditure was at once restored. Responsibility was fixed; and leakages were stopped. How serious those leakages had been in the past we may realise by remembering that (from a chain of circumstances unnecessary to detail here) there were two rival agents in the Levant buying corn for the Maltese government, bidding against each other and raising, at one and the same time, the price of corn and the rate of exchange. This was now put a stop to, and the waste thus prevented, supplemented by the actual saving in money and stores effected at Lampedusa, relieved the finances of the island to an appreciable extent. But Maitland shook his head over them. We are £200,000 in debt, he wrote; even supposing that the plague cost us £100,000, the remaining debt is still much too large to be easily dealt with. Then came one of those curious moans that Maitland was continually emitting about his health. He had only been at work a year, after a year's holiday, and though the year had been very trying, it sounds strange to hear the governor exclaiming that he must have six months' leave immediately, as his health imperatively

demanded it. 'I do not sleep upon a bed of roses,' he wrote at the end of 1814; 'but perhaps if I were granted leave I might go to Rome for my holiday and see the Pope about the question of sanctuary in Malta.'

However, the momentous year 1815 opened, and found Maitland still at work. By this time despatches had reached him from England, and informed him that his work was approved. He warmly acknowledged the 'handsome manner' in which Bathurst spoke of his services. The new court, he admitted, worked well or ill according to the temper of each individual judge; but, as a total result, they got through in months what had formerly taken them years. On the whole, he was satisfied with the spirit in which his changes had been received; but there still remained one very thorny question—that of the hospital.

Early in January 1815 the Grand Cross of the Bath was conferred on Maitland. It was in this year that the Order, which had formerly consisted of one class only, on the model of the Orders of the Garter and the Thistle, was broken up into three divisions, its present constitution; and Maitland was in the first batch of Grand Crosses. But though he was gazetted (on the 2d of January 1815) he had no insignia for a long time; and on the 25th of June he wrote, 'I wish you would manage to send on by the first packet the insignia of the Bath either with

an order for investiture or a dispensation to wear them. As far as it relates to myself, I should certainly not have given you this trouble, but the people here are excessively tenacious on everything of that kind, and they cannot understand a man being a Grand Cross without his wearing the badges thereof.' This passage is quoted verbatim in order that Maitland's feelings about decorations may be justly appreciated. His enemies were accustomed to say that his soldierly roughness was a mere affectation, and that in fact he was childishly vain, and greedy of adulation and distinctions. There is abundant evidence of his feelings to be found in the correspondence relating to the establishment of the Order of St Michael and St George. Far from bearing out the view of Maitland's enemies, it will be found that it shows Maitland to have been revoltingly cynical on the subject. He never spoke of Orders (and he wore three Grand Crosses himself) without obviously imitating the language of Swift about Flimnap, the treasurer of Lilliput, and his two pieces of silk—the blue and the red. Whether his vanity was of that monstrous kind that can only be covered by so vast an affectation is the point on which the friends and foes of Maitland will always be divided. But there is abundant justification for the view that though his cynical temper could not resist the temptation to write about decorations as he did, he yet perfectly recognised their place in a sound scheme of government. He

neither abused nor lavished them; in this, as in all matters, he was punctiliously careful of the King's honour, and if that be demonstrated, his personal vanity or lack of vanity is a question of no import whatever.

Piracy in the Mediterranean was no new grievance, and Maitland (now Sir Thomas) very early in the year expressed his anxiety lest our naval forces should be unequal to the task of dealing with it. He said that we wanted at least three small ships of war to protect our trade, and keep open communication with Smyrna and Constantinople. There was, however, no immediate menace, and the question that occupied the governor for some time, and caused a long correspondence with Sir Robert Liston, our Ambassador at the Porte, was the very undesirable appointment of Mr Critico as Turkish Consul at Malta. Liston was his old acquaintance of Philadelphia. 'Though Liston is an excellent man,' he wrote, 'he is rather timid, and requires a little hint now and then to get him to act.' But we must be fair to Liston, and admit that Critico's immediate recall was not a very easy thing to ask for from the Turkish government; and it was especially disagreeable to him to have to ask it, because Liston had himself recommended Critico to Maitland. The consul's offence consisted in laying on heavier dues for ships clearing for Turkish ports than the island government charged to Turkish ships plying to Malta. This was 'an unheard of

innovation,' and would materially injure if not totally annihilate the most lucrative part of the trade of Malta.' Critico remonstrated with the governor, and talked of his 'embarrassing situation': '*nella mia delicatezza*,' he said, the question ought to be dealt with more gently. He little knew Maitland. '*Delicatezza!*' he angrily replied, there was none: and Mr Critico's course was a very plain one; he would either revise his tariff of fees or go. 'Between ourselves,' he wrote to Bunbury, 'this Critico is a desperate bad one. You can find out his character in England, where he has long lived. . . . It is too much that the King's Government in England should be exerting itself to create trade here, and that a vagabond of this description should be doing infinitely more harm than you can do good.' 'It is totally impossible to go on with such a fellow!' Critico against Maitland: the fight was decided almost before it was begun. The man who had routed Lushington hardly condescended to put on his armour for a mere consul. Plasket and Hankey and Wood, the governor's satellites, must have smiled grimly as they saw Critico going forth to do battle with 'King Tom' with no more formidable weapons than '*mia delicatezza*.'

The question of piracy now suddenly flared up. As so often happened to Maitland, he found himself face to face with a situation where he had to act on his own initiative. As regards the Barbary States,

and the attitude that Malta should assume towards them, his instructions were silent. He did not hesitate on that account.

'Sir' (he wrote to the Pacha of Tripoli on the 16th of March 1815), 'it is with extreme regret I feel myself under the necessity of addressing Your Highness on a subject that may, in its consequences, compromise that amicable understanding and friendship which has so long subsisted between Your Highness and the British nation. But it is impossible for me to admit of any open indignity to be shown to the British nation or the British flag in this neighbourhood, without immediately taking such notice of it as is suitable to the dignity, power and maritime pre-eminence of the King, my master.

I therefore have the honour to inform you that I have sent instructions to His Majesty's Consul, Colonel Warington, to demand instant redress and reparation for the insult offered to the British Crown in permitting two vessels with British colours flying to be seized in the port of Your Highness, and under the guns of your works; and I have further directed the consul to intimate to you that he can enter into no communication of any kind till such redress is given.' 'My letter to the Pasha,' he wrote to Bunbury, 'is pretty pithy, but it is the only language that suits these gentlemen.'

In reporting the incident, he asked that the flaw in his instructions might be remedied; but, he added as

a warning, 'nothing impresses these powers except military or naval force.'

Lord William Bentinck, having resigned the Palermo Embassy to A'Court, was already up to his neck in a fresh difficulty that he had created for himself—this time at Genoa. Napoleon had just escaped from Elba, and no one could tell where he would strike his first blow. Bentinck, as was usual with him in times of crisis, lost his head at once, and sent an urgent appeal to Maitland for support. 'It is most unpleasant to have to refuse,' wrote Maitland to Bunbury, but if he were to help Bentinck in Genoa, he could hardly refuse Macfarlane in Sicily, who was also asking for the loan of some troops; and his duty would not allow him to leave Malta without a garrison. Bentinck is rather gloomy, he continued, and always takes the worst point of view. In point of fact there was no real danger, as Maitland very well knew. The idea that Napoleon would turn on Italy instead of proceeding to Paris was the foundation of Bentinck's alarm. But that Bentinck should have entertained any such idea only shows to what little purpose he had followed the great events that were taking place around him. He had a second, and hardly less lively scare, which was that the French in Italy would march against him in the cause of the Emperor. And yet Bentinck had been in the thick of the negotiations with Murat, and could hardly have helped knowing that the King of Naples was about the last person in

the world to come to Napoleon's help. That the public should have been scared and bewildered was perfectly excusable; but what was the use of Bentinck's being in the innermost circle of diplomacy if he was to share the panics of the ignorant public?

When the battle of Waterloo put an end to all uncertainty, Maitland made no allusion to it in his correspondence, except by noting that it had taken place, and might be expected to have a favourable effect on trade. His correspondence is singularly devoid of comments on passing events. Most governors and high officials spent a few minutes now and then in compliments or allusions to home politics, but Maitland never digressed in this way—not even for the battle of Waterloo. But he did once offer to get Lord Bathurst some maraschino if he liked it good.

In the summer of 1815 Maitland took six weeks casual leave, General Layard officiating as Lieutenant-Governor in his absence. He attacked very little new work in the course of this year. It was as much as he could do to superintend the development of his new arrangements for the purchase of corn, and keep an eye on the working of his reconstituted Courts of Justice. The tremendous events that were passing on the continent of Europe were enough to hold even Maitland's attention; and he was contented to see that his accounts balanced, and to wait for the new settlement that must be impending. But he found time

to send two young Maltese of family to England for their education. In commending them to Bathurst, he begged that they might not be 'treated with that redundancy of attention' that had befallen the two Mudeliars whom he had, with the same good object, sent home from Ceylon—spoilt, in short. Administration was one thing, and a very important thing; but as regards the character of the Maltese there will be nothing done, he wrote, without a change in the system of education. Young men would do well to go to England; all those, that is, who could afford to do so. As regards the educational establishments in the island, he could only report that 'as every man has a right to be taught for nothing, very few think it worth their while to learn at all;' while the Greek College was an actual nuisance.

But the principal object of his attention, and the chief subject of his correspondence throughout the year 1815, was the rumoured retention by England of the Ionian Islands. He was sounded on this point as early as May; and his first remark was that in any such intended settlement of Mediterranean affairs, it was much to be desired that there should be one commander-in-chief for the Mediterranean, exclusive of Gibraltar. He admitted that this suggestion coming from him looked like a proposal for his personal aggrandizement; but could only trust that his known zeal for the King's service would protect him from

any such imputation. He calculated rightly, and his suggestion was acted upon later.

As the months went by, and Maitland found himself face to face with the growing certainty of our permanent occupation of the Seven Islands, he expressed himself as much perturbed at the prospect. 'I cannot look to the assumption of the sovereignty of the Seven Islands without some dread,' he wrote in September 1815; 'we shall find them very expensive if we do not take care,' and the cheapest way to govern them undoubtedly would be to double up the governments of Malta and the Ionian Islands. If this were done (as it was ultimately), he was of opinion that the modest sum of £1000 extra as yearly salary for the new governor ought to suffice. It was now becoming plain that he was being thought of for the new post, and although communications on the subject were still 'private and confidential,' he entered more freely into details. 'As regards our new possessions,' he wrote, 'a great deal should be done—and nothing.' By this he meant that a great deal would have to be done to set things going at all, but that the ground was all so new and strange that we ought to make it plain from the commencement that everything was provisional. As regards 'granting new liberties,' he was strongly of opinion that we ought to move slowly. It is difficult to draw back, but easy enough to move on, if we only move cautiously. By October it was practically settled that the new

government would be conferred on him. 'As soon as I receive official notice of my appointment I shall proceed straight to Corfu, and from there to the other islands.' Our difficulty at first would be nothing less than a dilemma; if we appoint too many Englishmen there will be jealousy; yet nothing is clearer than that the government that we set up will succeed just so far as it is administered by Englishmen, and no farther. What that government will be it is impossible to say, for, 'as the Ionians have professed equal attachment for all the powers that have ruled them in turn, there will be a queer state of things to deal with.' 'Least of all can I think for a moment with temper of anything like a representative government. We tried that experiment in Sicily, and the result was what one naturally would have expected where the whole community was divided into two classes, viz., tyrants and slaves. Neither the one nor the other are fitted to enjoy the blessings of a free government. We may hereafter prepare them for it. In the meantime, all we can do is to correct the abuses that may exist, to rule them with moderation, and turn their thoughts gradually to improvements that may be made as they advance in their ideas, and in their knowledge of true and sound policy.' Words of exalted wisdom, which exactly describe what ought to have been done. Nevertheless, it was representative government that Maitland was ultimately commanded to establish.

'The experiment of Sicily,' he went on, 'was certainly a most unfortunate one, injurious to the very thing it wished to establish, for it has gone very far to convince all the considerate people in this country that a free government is incompatible with the existence of a strong one, they never discovering that the fault lay not with the government, but with the person who administered it.'

The 'experiment of Sicily' was the work of Lord William Bentinck, so Maitland could hardly be expected to admire it; and in fact it was not admirable.

Nothing more definite was either said or settled during the year 1815, and Maitland turned back to the duties of his old charge, Malta. A very curious embarrassment had recently been added to his duties; he had become the custodian of Savary, Duke of Rovigo, who was immured at Malta, but was not treated with harshness. He had succeeded Fouché as chief of Napoleon's police, and had been concerned in the restoration which preceded the Hundred Days. He was a great inconvenience to us, and was in the end allowed to escape. But while under Maitland's care he was in much anxiety, for his one belief was that his head was being demanded at one and the same time by the Bourbons on account of the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, and by the British Government on account of the mysterious disappearance of young

Mr Bathurst at Hamburg in the year 1809. As a matter of fact, we had no wish either for Savary's head or for the information that he was daily and with much eagerness offering to the governor as the price of his safety. Maitland never saw him, and paid him no attentions beyond those civilities that were proper to so distinguished a prisoner. He was far too busy to occupy himself with the scandals of the secret police of Paris, and Savary's long and damaging memorials were forwarded by him to England without comment. The only point that he concerned himself with was his prisoner's keep; he was anxious to be allowed to treat him well, and not to charge him for his wine. But what was really occupying his attention during the last month of 1815 was the attitude of the Barbary States. There being some confusion there, he wrote, 'I shall go and personally inspect the consulates. It is not a pleasant journey, but things have to be set right both with the pachas and with our consuls.' He returned from his journey on the 7th of December, and was relieved not to have to 'plague Lord Bathurst' with any unsolved difficulties. But difficulties there must be in the future. We shall have to consider all these powers '(1) as powers possessing sovereignty, but (2) as exercising that sovereignty in a manner so totally discordant to every recognised principle of civilised nations that we are all bound to resist it.' Compulsory ransom

of Christian slaves ought at once to be insisted on by all the Christian powers.

Sir Thomas Maitland laid himself open to criticism in many ways. But in one respect he was unapproachable as an administrator: he paid precisely the same attention to every one of his duties, both small and great. To be born a Maitland was already so much of human greatness, that no rank or dignity of employment could add to his natural importance. No post could be beyond his merits, and no kind of work beneath him. From the height of his pride of birth all minor elevations disappeared in the level plain of duty. Hence he was neither elated at being called to perhaps the most difficult post in Europe, nor revolted at being compelled to divide his attention between the grave duties of Lord High Commissioner designate, and the somewhat sordid difficulties attending the reform of the public hospital of Malta. They were both pieces of work in the King's service, for which he had taken the King's pay; and it behoved him to turn out both in the best possible manner, as befitted a Maitland. The actual condition of the public hospital when the governor turned on it, with the savage energy with which he always attacked an abuse, was such that most governors would have been well pleased to leave its reform to a capable subordinate. But, if truth be told, Maitland had no capable subordinates; he did not encourage them. He liked subordinates who were capable of nothing

but taking orders from himself. This gave colour to his enemies' gibe that he surrounded himself with sycophants; and in feeble hands the habit would doubtless have led to grave inconveniences. A man who will delegate no fraction of his power must needs do all the work himself, in which case it will be badly done; and the current of governing force which ought to flow in a steady stream, fed from many sources will end by spreading out into a delta of ineffectual rills.

But not Napoleon himself was a greater glutton for work than Sir Thomas Maitland. He patrolled the public hospital, inquired into the qualifications of the surgeons and the capacity of their assistants; examined the patients and the visitors, studied the regulations of the buildings, and then changed everything. 'Formerly,' he wrote, 'it was a scene of filth and disorganisation more disgusting than anything I have ever seen, and more in the nature of a place of public resort than of a charitable institution for the cure of diseases. All the friends of the patients and others were indiscriminately admitted at all times into the hospital, and the patients were allowed at all times to go forth out of it; and, in fact, it was neither more nor less than an institution where, with the benefits of getting a ticket, which they always could, the idle and the profligate were living at the expense of government.' The net result of his reforms was to

reduce the number of 'patients' by one-half. This was his first piece of work in the year 1816. His second was to make a fresh assault on the Università. Having practically suppressed it as a body purveying corn for the island, he now attacked the supply of cattle, macaroni, oil and ice, in regard to all of which they pretended the right to cater for the island. But this was beyond him for the moment; that gigantic ring of corruption beat, for the moment, even the governor's energy. It was with the energy of the recoil that he turned on the judges, who chose this moment of discouragement to demur to some new regulation touching the law of evidence. Maitland sent for them most gladly, and menacingly ordered them to do as they were told. 'With firmness and steadiness in the head of the government,' he wrote complacently after the interview, 'I have no doubt they will be brought into every measure that may be desirable.'

Rightly was Maitland nicknamed King Tom, for no monarch ever acted with more entire freedom from respect to other men's views when he thought that the King's service would be advantaged by his disregarding his orders. He had been straitly commanded not to leave Malta until the arrival of Layard, as the officer on whom the Government would devolve in Layard's absence was not competent. Nevertheless, late in January 1816, he

announced his intention of going to Zante forthwith in order to commence his tour of inspection, leaving Anderson and Wood behind him to look after the acting Lieutenant-Governor, 'who cannot do much mischief in these few days.' That is, he was determined to do the identical thing that he was forbidden to do. 'The King's service will suffer less by my disobeying orders than by obeying them.' He therefore spent the spring of 1816 in touring through the seven islands that were soon to be his charge, leaving behind him, however, a fervid memorandum on our relations with Ali Pacha. Within the pacha's province there was a small district that had always been regarded as an outpost of Corfu. This mainland possession took its name from the chief town, Parga, a little fort and market, the cession of which was to give rise to more fierce discussion, and to get Maitland into more hot water than any other event of his administration. It was upon the resident at Parga that the duty of conducting our negotiations with Ali Pacha would devolve: and the resident at Parga was the only subordinate with whom Maitland in his long career wrestled a fall and was thrown. The plaintiff in the case *De Bosset* v. *Maitland*, was a Swiss who had entered the British service and had risen to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. Decorated with the Third Class of the Bath, we shall see later under what circumstances—so flattering to himself, and so severely reflecting on Maitland—he was made a K.H. Of

the post where De Bosset earned most of the ill-will that produced his dismissal, Maitland wrote (before he had any inkling of the man who would be appointed): 'For this post anybody will do; but although I am indifferent to the individual filling the post, I must insist on his being placed under my control!' Maitland's enemies were never tired dwelling on his anxiety to see everybody placed under his control, but he gave (as always) plausible reasons for his anxiety on this occasion. 'It is impossible to imagine in England what strides gentlemen are apt to take in remote situations, and when they have no immediate control over them, of which indeed I have seen enough from the general feelings of the consuls.'

On this occasion he deigned to expand his views on the needs of the King's service which were impelling him to disobey orders. The mass of intrigue that was going on in the Ionian Islands as to the appointment of the Lord High Commissioner was, he wrote, unimaginable. There was some sort of idea that he was to be elected by the Ionians. Frederick North (Lord North, as they called him) was a hot favourite. Lord Aberdeen was in the running also; but North had remarkable recommendations for an Englishman. Not only was he a good Greek scholar, but he spoke modern Greek fluently. Moreover, his domineering conscience had compelled him, very early in life, to decide for himself which was the true Church, and he had made (for an English-

man) the singular choice of the Orthodox Church. Here were strong qualifications indeed. He was, moreover, as we saw in Ceylon, a perfect gentleman, with engaging manners and a romantic and sentimental nature. He was, perhaps, the most gentlemanly and the most thoroughly incapable colonial governor that England ever sent out to a difficult situation. As Lord High Commissioner, a scarecrow would have been more efficient. The sooner the Ionians had it brought home to them that Thomas Maitland and not Frederick North was to be their new ruler, the better for all concerned; especially for the King's service. So reasoned Maitland, as in the spring of 1816 he betook himself to Zante and reviewed the ground that was to be the scene of his heaviest labours and his greatest triumphs.

CHAPTER XII

THE IONIAN ISLANDS — EARLY DIFFICULTIES — ANARCHY AND BANKRUPTCY OF THE ISLANDS — CONSTITUTION-MONGERING — MAITLAND IS SPIED UPON — HIS REVENGE

THE traveller in Verona may see in the Square of the Burnt Houses a commemorative tablet with this inscription,—

Il nome di questa piazza rammenta

. . . . . .

L'ultimo giorno di Venezia republica.

Aprile 1797.

Those were the days when the young Napoleon said, 'Venice shall find me an Attila;' and when the territory of Venice, island and mainland, were portioned out among her invaders. Austria took the mainland, and held it till Sadowa; France took the islands.

So fell the ancient Republic of Venice. She had been wealthy, and perhaps greedy of wealth: but she had never been greedy of territory. Towards her neighbours she had maintained an attitude of masterly inactivity, and was perhaps as much hated on account of her selfish isolation as because her

government was worse than that of other States. In one direction, however, she had been acquisitive, and tenacious of her conquests. Her most lucrative trade had always been with the East, and in order to control the trade route through the Adriatic she had annexed the Ionian Islands, and stoutly defended them. For four hundred years they had been Venetian ground.

But by the end of the eighteenth century the conditions of trade had wholly changed. Venice was no longer a first-rate power, and the Adriatic was but a backwater. Why then should Buonaparte be so eager to retain the Islands, and to leave to Austria the wealthy provinces of the mainland? It was because he was scheming to make them the starting point for his expedition to the East: an expedition that was to be not a business enterprise, but a conquest, a second invasion of Alexander. To serve this end the Ionian Islands were to be retained by France as a nursery for her sailors and a refuge for her fleets.

At the moment when he set his enterprise on foot, the Mediterranean was clear of English ships, but before the disorganised dockyards of Toulon could come to his help, the English had made good the start that they had lost. The battles of the Texel and St Vincent set our fleets free, and the genius of Nelson completed the ruin of France in the Mediterranean. The Ionian Islands, a department of the French

Republic, were now beleaguered by hostile fleets. Not, however, by English fleets, but by a joint flotilla of Russians and Turks. The Russians had already made a bid for a post that would give them some influence in the Mediterranean by offering us their support *totis viribus* during the American War in exchange for Minorca. They now hoped to do at least as well for themselves in the Adriatic. But Turkey looked on the derelict islands as properly belonging to the Balkan Peninsula, where she was at that time supreme. She considered herself the natural inheritor of these waifs, as well as of the territory of Parga on the mainland. The situation resulted in a compromise; and the two most despotic powers in the world agreed to erect the Seven Islands into a republic. They granted it a constitution which went by the name of the Byzantine Constitution. This is probably the only example of Turkey granting representative institutions, if we except the constitution of Midhat Pacha.

The Byzantine Constitution would not work; and St Petersburg (not Byzantium) was appealed to to set it in order. Again were modifications asked for; the constitution was re-drafted, and verbally approved by the Czar Alexander as he was setting out for the Tilsit campaign. When this campaign had been fought, Russian influence might be considered on the decline for a time. By a secret article of the treaty that concluded it, the Islands were ceded to France.

This was the opening of Napoleon's third attempt

to break the chain of British communications. The Islands were, one by one, occupied by English naval and military forces, with the exception of Corfu. Thus the authority to which Maitland succeeded was twofold: in six of the islands it was the right of conquest; in the seventh it was cession under a treaty.

This rapid and fragmentary survey of the history of twenty years is necessary, if we would attain to any measure of comprehension of Maitland's difficulties. The eyes of all Europe were on him; for all the nations of Europe had coveted the Islands over which he was now called to rule. The Islands were valued for two reasons, firstly, because of the prescriptive renown that they enjoyed while part of the dominions of Venice; secondly, because of the use to which it was known that Napoleon had designed to put them —a stepping-stone to India. Nor was that all. To and fro for one hundred and fifty years, the tide of British influence had ebbed and flowed in the Mediterranean. Our position at the Gates had proved impregnable; but beyond the Gates all was uncertain. We had advanced to Minorca and retired—once, twice, and thrice. We had proclaimed George III. King of Corsica; his kingdom had proved as ephemeral as that of Theodore, who died a bankrupt, having scheduled 'my Kingdom of Corsica' as his sole asset, and whose epitaph on the walls of St Anne's, Soho, was written by Horace Walpole. Some such

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fleeting memorandum seemed to be the destiny of all our Mediterranean conquests. We occupied Egypt, and returned it to the Sublime Porte. We occupied Sicily, and handed it back to the Neapolitan Bourbons. We had occupied Italian islands by the handful, and evacuated them. Two only of our conquests remained in our hands at the Great Peace. Malta had surrendered to our arms after a blockade lasting two years—a blockade so close that it was run by only five ships throughout the entire period; and the ancient sovereignty of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem was succeeded by the government of a crown colony. After a series of unparalleled vicissitudes, the Ionian Islands had fallen most unexpectedly into our hands. What was to be the fate of these new possessions? Was Corfu to be another Minorca, and was Malta to go the way of Sicily? Everything depended on Maitland.

We must not fail to realise the immense importance of the position at that time occupied by England in the Mediterranean. French contemporary essayists admitted, without any reserve, that England, who at the commencement of the war of the French Revolution held only the key to the inland sea, now held in her hands, unchallenged, the Mastery of the Mediterranean. It was no idle phrase. There was, of course, no such power as Italy. France was prostrate and Spain no more formidable than she is. now The posts that we held were undoubtedly

far stronger than any that we had relinquished. Nor was that all. To-day, European powers have settled in force along the African shore of the sea, and Russia has pushed very near to the Bosphorus. In Maitland's day Turkey was vastly stronger than she is at present, and no single Christian power held a square mile of territory on the southern shores of the sea. To-day, we are but one strong power among several: three-quarters of a century ago we had no rival and no appearance of a rival.

Some estimate can now be formed of the importance of Maitland's post as Governor of Malta and Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands, and of the difficulties inherent in the heavy two-fold duties thrown upon him. These difficulties were more than doubled by the character of the people with whom he had to deal, and by the obligation laid upon him by the Treaty of Paris to govern the Islands constitutionally. If we would in any way realise them, we must do as Maitland did, and examine (although not necessarily so thoroughly) some incidents of the twenty years of history that closed with the surrender of Corfu.

Venice had held the Ionians 'in the most abject state of slavery and ignorance.' This was to the advantage of Venice; the Ionians were thus more easily governed. The rule of Venice had been succeeded by a fleeting moment of French domination, followed by the grotesque joint government of Russia and

Turkey. Under the agreement between these two remarkable allies, Turkey was recognised as the Suzerain of the Islands; but Russia furnished the garrison. The suzerainty of Turkey was not formally abrogated until Maitland brought it about; and it was understood that the mainland territories of Venice—Parga and the surrounding country—were to become definitely Turkish. Whether this meant that they were to be surrendered to the Sublime Porte, or to the local governor—the powerful vazir, Ali Pacha—made one of the stormiest questions of the day. How much respect was paid to this convention was shown when Russia, from the vantage ground of Corfu (Turkish territory), made war on Ali Pacha—a Turkish governor. How the Ionians understood their position may be gathered from their description of Count Mocenigo as 'the enlightened minister our countryman, the faithful interpreter of his generous Sovereign's magnanimous intentions.' As 'our countryman' must needs be, like his fellow-countrymen, a Turkish subject, one would suppose that 'his generous Sovereign' here referred to was the Sultan. By no means; it was the Czar. But this is only the beginning of the absurdities of the situation. Count Mocenigo left Corfu as Minister Plenipotentiary at St Petersburg. He was charged with the duty of asking for a constitution. But he was to make no suggestions; he was to accept everything unquestioningly from the

'adorable hand of Alexander.' He left as an Ionian, he returned as a Russian, the Minister Plenipotentiary of the Czar to the Ionian Islands. From the moment of his return he always referred to the Czar as 'my august master.' He commanded the senate to drop a bill that he considered to be opposed to 'the will of the Sovereign.' He issued his instructions, in fact, like a Russian governor. Confusion of ideas could hardly go further. Yet when the constitution broke down, it was to Turkey that application was made to set matters straight. The Suzerain rose to the occasion and issued a thundering firman, in which he threatened the most severe punishment to the unruly. What the 'adorable Alexander' thought of the firman is not recorded, but no protest was issued against it; indeed, it was a perfectly regular act. But with two sovereigns, a Russian army ashore, a Turkish fleet at sea, a couple of constitutions, both crazy, to choose from, and nothing more luminous to guide them than the traditions of Venice, it is not to be wondered at that, as Plato Petrides reported, 'the nation had fallen into the last state of passive vegetation.' Capodistrias, the Secretary of State, described the country as completely disorganised, and unfit to stand alone. But 'passive' was hardly a proper description of the Ionian character; they were a very fierce and passionate people, and the unique combination of a highly intelligent population seething with angry

passions, and completely emancipated from authority, produced some horribly grotesque incidents. There were several cases discovered (and probably many undiscovered) where a would-be murderer, having marked down his victim, betook himself to the judge. Not, however, with the object of making confession, in order that he might be restrained from his hateful crime, but with the object of striking a bargain. The man was to die; for how much then would the judge undertake to deliver a verdict of not guilty. The bargain once struck, the murderer went his way, knifed his man, and then gave himself up to 'justice.' A country in which such incidents were possible can hardly be said to have emerged from the first stage of savagery. Yet it would be most unfair to the Ionians to lay on them the blame of their country's disorder. That freedom and independence are plants of slow growth is the most commonplace of platitudes; and what chance had the miserable Ionians ever had of developing either their national character or their national institutions? Among the arts in which the world will long remain the humble pupil of Venice, the art of government has no place. Her methods of government may furnish periods to orators and plots to grand opera, but to live under them must have been debasing and humiliating beyond conception.

But although we may sincerely commiserate the Ionians for their misfortunes, we must not conceal

the fact that their misfortunes had, in point of fact, told most lamentably on their character. Even to have ruled the Islands as a non-regulation province would have taxed the courage and resources of the most capable Lieutenant-Governor that England ever sent to the East. To ask Maitland to rule them under a constitution conferring representative government on the people, was to ask him to perform a sheer and ludicrous impossibility. There was nothing to work on. 'The character most dreaded and detested in all these countries is that of an honest and upright man. They equally detest an honest government. They neither understand nor appreciate a fair, open and manly part.' '"Liberty and independence" means independence of all judicial proceedings, and liberty of plundering their country.' 'Such is the inveterate propensity to venality and corruption on all hands, that they consider being employed under government as a trust delegated to them for no other purpose but to make the most of it for their private interests.'

This is an unpromising beginning; but Maitland was resolved to make it perfectly plain that he was being called upon to clean an Augean stable. He therefore wrote more in detail to Lord Bathurst, showing quite clearly what manner of duty he was now being called upon to face.

Speaking of the nobles, he wrote, 'If we look at the characters of the rulers here, we find them ever bending to the power of the day, taking new oaths to

their new masters with the same fulsome civility they obeyed their old ones, rescinding this hour what they had done the last, and looking at no one thing but how, at the expense of character, of honour and of integrity, they are to maintain themselves in the degraded situation in which they are placed.' This is severe indeed, but hardly more than a bare recital of facts. Somewhat more critical is this passage, 'One of the radical faults that pervades all classes here is the idea they entertain of making a constitution: they do not hold this by any manner of means to be laying down fundamental principles of government binding upon all, immutable in themselves, and made solely for the benefit of all, but they consider it eternally connected with the executive government, the smallest portion of which, if they retain in their own hands, they think the constitution is good; but if not, they think it equally bad, and are ripe for any novelty. They consider it not as tending to give security to all, but as tending to benefit themselves; and, in fact, consider and look at nothing else but personal aggrandizement at the expense of the interests of the rest of the community.' 'If we gave such a people a real constitution, they would simply violate it from day to day.'

Maitland then added a weighty comment, which, while it tended to excuse the Ionians, also added materially to our own perplexities. 'Every promise,' he said, 'every promise that has been made since the

fall of Venice has been made but to deceive. They therefore believe nothing that is said to them. They will assent to any constitution, but they will look upon it as a mere juggle.' Nor would they even believe that our hands were clean the while, for there was little doubt that both Mocenigo and the French had made considerable fortunes out of their dealings with public affairs.

Capodistrias had stated with perfect plainness his own opinion that there was no chance of governing the Islands successfully except through the medium of a large armed force. By a 'large armed force' he meant 14,000 troops and a fleet of 36 sail. This was the force that the Russian government kept up in the Islands as late as the date of the Treaty of Tilsit, 1807. This was the force that enabled them to defy the remonstrances of the Porte and abrogate the Byzantine Constitution in favour of Mocenigo's. The impotence of the Porte in the face of so great a display of the military so enraged them that they gladly gave Sebastiani an undertaking to recognise the Islands as part of the French Empire. All that was now ancient history; but the impression remained that no government was possible unless resting on the support of an army of this size. It is hardly necessary to say that Maitland never had an army approaching this size under his command. The troops of all arms with the colours numbered 4260 only on the 28th of September 1817.

This was about the average strength of the army in the two garrisons of Malta and Corfu, although Maitland himself said that they ought never to fall below 6000.

We have, then, to observe that the internal difficulties which had baffled all his predecessors in their efforts to maintain a stable government had been partially overcome by the display of a great armed force, and even that resource was taken away from Maitland. There was another difficulty which applied to him alone, that will be noticed in its place; a difficulty greater than all the others put together. But leaving that out of the question for the moment, the simple conclusion of contemporaries was that we were attempting the impossible.

On the 29th of November 1816, Maitland issued his first proclamation to the Ionian people. He announced that he would do his best to fulfil the wishes of the Allied Powers, and further the welfare of the Ionians. He should immediately proceed to draft a constitution; and in order to give an idea of what it would be, he reviewed the various constitutions under which the Ionians had dwelt in the preceding twenty years. Nothing, he said, would induce him to revive the government (if it could be so called) of Venice. Here we must pause and read between the lines. This allusion to Venice was Maitland's silent but very plain menace to the nobles. It was under the rule of Venice that they had attained to complete authority,

and shared the plunder of the Islands. Their power was unlimited, and—chiefly in consequence of their corrupt influence over the Courts of Justice—unshakable. When Venice fell, the nobles had been set to guard the trees of liberty erected by the French. But they had rapidly regained their power; and all the disturbances of the last twenty years had their origin in blundering attempts to take it away from them, and in their own stubborn resolve to preserve it. Maitland, in his first proclamation, thus gave them to understand that he would not endure their usurpations. He next reviewed the other constitutions, examined the causes of their failure, and finally announced that he should take Mocenigo's constitution of 1803 as the basis of his own.

At this time Mocenigo was in Naples with Capodistrias. He dined with A'Court, our minister there. A'Court opened the subject of Maitland's proclamation as one likely to interest his guests, and said that perhaps they might like to know its purport and the manner in which it had been received in Corfu. Mocenigo smiled, and assured A'Court that he was very well pleased with its tenour; but he knew his countrymen, he added; and then, with a shrug, 'If General Maitland expects to keep them in good humour for any length of time, he will be greatly disappointed.' A'Court was a good deal taken aback. But Mocenigo was pleasantly frank, and had no objection to A'Court knowing that he had had

Maitland's despatch opened and detained on the road, and a copy forwarded to him before the original went to the ambassador. His information was thus several days ahead of A'Court's.

Thus was Maitland from the outset brought face to face with his greatest difficulty. This was the elaborate network of intrigue and spying with which he was surrounded. Nobody could be trusted; not even his own couriers, or the couriers of foreign States. Everywhere there were Ionian agents working to supply the nobles and their party with secret information. But they little knew the resolute man with whom they were dealing. If they could mine, Maitland could countermine. If they opened his letters, he opened theirs; and in this contest he had a notable advantage. For a single hint was enough to let him know where his enemies were, of whom he should beware, and how he could baffle them. And he was in power, and could dispose of good things. A single intercepted letter gave him the key to the whole intrigue. 'I will soon find out what this Maitland is like, and then I will let you know what I make of him for His Majesty's information.' His Majesty was the Czar Alexander; the writer of the letter was old Capodistrias, and it was addressed to Count John Capodistrias, the Russian Secretary of State. Alexander's share in the business appears to have been greatly exaggerated. He did indeed write autograph letters of recommendation for Capodistrias,

letters which gave the Cabinet infinite trouble, and (to some members of it) no small anxiety. But there his interest ceased, or appears to have done so. Nevertheless 'the Russian party,' with old Capodistrias as its centre in Corfu, and John Capodistrias as its powerful agent abroad, was, throughout Maitland's administration, his greatest anxiety. Having got the clue, he speedily made use of it. Henceforth, when one of the Russian party paid a visit to the palace he was received with overwhelming civility, and numerous posts were pressed on him. But the civility was impenetrable, and the posts were always uninfluential. When other posts were applied for, the application was most favourably received; but there was generally a hitch sooner or later, and the post went to someone else. Earlier in the year, Maitland had not hesitated to dismiss, without the slightest ceremony, no fewer than four senators and the secretary, who forthwith posed as martyrs in the cause of Ionian liberty. 'Martyrs!' wrote the Lord High, 'corrupt and insufferable intriguers.'

So, one by one, and occasionally in batches, the Capodistrians were edged out of the good things and condemned to inaction. No wonder they raged secretly but not silently, for the good things were many, and Maitland gave them all to their enemies. No wonder that a sort of gunpowder plot was discovered, the object of which was to annihilate Maitland. It was not really a plot, but it was disclosed,

half hatched, to the Lord High Commissioner, apparently with the intention of shaking his nerves. From the beginning he expressed his total incredulity of the whole story. The officer who discovered the 'plot' was given clearly to understand that running with the hare and hunting with the hounds was not what Maitland approved. He was to get his reward from the Capodistrians for managing the details, and from Maitland for disclosing them. Whatever he got from his first employers, he got nothing from government except a clear intimation that he was seen through, and had better not try the same thing again. Gradually the Ionian nobles began to confess to themselves and each other, raging the while, that they had found their master. Not Russian admiral, nor Turkish pacha, nor Imperial marshal, nor (in the old days) Venetian provveditore, had been so hard to deal with. In fact, there was no dealing with him. The only course to pursue was to obey him, or else retire into private life. It soon became plainly advantageous to keep in with the Lord High. Already the constitution was under weigh. Already there were rumours of a new Order of Knighthood.

Disaffection, or as Maitland adroitly put it in his proclamation, 'opposition to the Treaty of Paris,' rapidly subsided. There came a short period of hesitation, and then, as he scornfully wrote, 'it has become a race which of them can run fastest into our arms.'

CHAPTER XIII

THE IONIAN ISLANDS—THE CONSTITUTION—EXTREME COMPLEXITY OF THE SITUATION—RATIFICATION OF THE CONSTITUTION—THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ORDER OF ST MICHAEL AND ST GEORGE

This was a favourable moment for the promulgation of the constitution, that famous instrument whose only function was to throw a decent veil over the despotism of Thomas Maitland. His instructions were to govern under a constitution; instructions which carried contradiction in every line. It was not that the Ionians were actually ungovernable. They were not more so than, for example, the Afghans, who, under the personal rule of a genius, make comparatively good subjects. It was that no constitution hitherto set going in the Islands would work. Nothing would have been easier than to draft a fresh instrument of government, conferring, say, the limited franchise that subsisted in England before the first Reform Bill. The heads of the noble houses would have made a respectable House of Lords. The power of voting money would have been restricted, of course, to

the Commons, and patronage would have been taken out of the hands of the Lord High Commissioner, and vested in his 'Cabinet.'

This would have been an easy course to pursue, and it would have had immediate and valuable results. It would have quieted Brougham and Hume and the Radicals, together with 'that worst of Radicals, Capodistrias,' as Maitland called him. Moreover, it would have worked for, at the outside, six months, at the end of which time we should have had to send an army corps to Corfu to restore order. Martial law would have been proclaimed, and the signatories of the Treaty of Paris would have been called together to reconsider the treaty. The clause providing for a constitution would have been abrogated, and the Seven Islands turned into a crown colony. This would have been better for everybody concerned, as Maitland told the Ionians. They had caused several applications to be made to him for assistance from England, and he had at once pointed out to them how much they had lost by their constitution. 'If you had been a crown colony,' he said, 'you might have drawn on the British treasury, but as you are an "independent republic," you must forego that advantage.' But to be at once 'independent' and dependent was exactly what the Ionians were seeking. Maitland, for his part, was perfectly contented, so long as the King was well served,

and he himself remained in effect a despot, two conditions that he regarded, and probably with reason, as inseparable. However audacious his 'constitution' may appear to us to-day, there remains this very cogent fact, that Capodistrias, from his great position as Russian Secretary of State, and availing himself of the personal recommendation of his imperial master, dragged Maitland's proceedings into the light of day. He angrily and unscrupulously arraigned them, and was patiently and laboriously answered by Castlereagh himself. The Lord High Commissioner was conclusively shown to have kept strictly within his powers under the treaty. A still better justification, although one that probably made no appeal to Capodistrias, was furnished by the magnificent results of his labours.

Turning aside, then, from the tempting course of drafting a real constitution—the failure of which would have made a fine appeal to his grim and cynical temper—he summoned a Primary Council. This, as he was careful to point out, was the precedent set by the Russians. When we say 'summoned,' we should perhaps be better to say 'nominated.' In fact he called together ten *magnificoes* whom he knew to be well-affected, or whom he bought with promises (and of whom he could feel comparatively sure), and took them into his confidence. Nominally they were deliberating on

the constitution; practically they were reading over Maitland's draft and altering it at their peril. They sat under a president, an officer who formerly enjoyed the title of prince, but until the constitution was passed he was not 'Your Highness;' he was only 'my dear sir,' or at best 'dear baron.' Maitland, as the fountain of honour, recognised no distinctions that did not flow from himself. The Primary Council were to be *ex-officio* members of the Legislative Assembly. By this ingenious device the Lord High Commissioner at once secured eleven votes in the Lower House, the total number of whose members was only forty. The twenty-nine remaining seats were to be filled by members elected by the Seven Islands proportionately to their population. But they were to be elected from lists of eligible members drawn up by the Primary Council; so a considerable control was exercised over the whole of the Lower House. The Upper House was elected by the Lower, but the Lord High Commissioner could veto any senator and order a fresh choice. If he vetoed the second choice, he must within twenty-four hours send down the names of two men of whom he approved as senators, and from these two the Lower House must make their choice, which would be final.

In his address to the Primary Council, Maitland gave a fairly broad hint of how much discretion he expected them to exercise. The first clause of the

Treaty of Paris relative to these Islands describes the Ionian Islands as a single, free and independent State. But the appointment of a Lord High Commissioner takes that away. 'If there be any persons,' he continued, 'whatever who can entertain a different feeling upon this subject, to such I can only say that all discussion of every kind with them must be totally useless.' To Lord Bathurst he wrote that it did not really matter what sort of a constitution was set up, so long as it prevented the Ionians from 'running wild.' The difficulty would be not to get the constitution passed, but to establish the practice under the constitution, as the Ionian 'duplicity, chicanery and want of principle cannot be exaggerated.' He was almost as plain spoken to the Primary Council. To the poor, he said, who should be the special care of the government (this was another hint to the nobles that they would no longer fatten on the spoils of the State), it matters nothing what system of administration be set up. But it is of the first importance that the administration of justice should be sound and speedy. Therefore (and Maitland's language menacingly underlined the conclusion), the judges must no longer be appointed by election. Instead of the electors choosing the judges, the Lord High Commissioner will nominate them.

Very wide powers were given to the senators. They could nominate the regents of the Islands, very

important officers. They could initiate legislative measures. They could conditionally arrest the progress of bills in the Lower House, and could also negative bills altogether. As the senate was only another name for the Lord High Commissioner, we can now arrive at some notion of the extent of power that Maitland reserved to himself. All the machinery of representative government was there: Upper House, Lower House, elective system and five-yearly parliaments. But this was only a pageantry: nothing could really move except by the will of the Lord High Commissioner, who was, in addition, commander-in-chief of the King's troops in the Islands and in Malta, as well as governor of the latter island. If there was ever a more absolute monarch on earth, it would be the Rajah of Sarawak.

Although from Maitland's emphatic and audacious language we might perhaps suppose that he was given to settling important matters in too great haste, we should make a great mistake if we rested in that conclusion. In dealing with the Ionians he did not, it is true, waste words. But he only dealt with the Ionians after he had most laboriously and in inconceivable detail recounted to the Secretary of State the grounds of his conclusions, and had made sure that his conclusions were approved of. 'Though I will not intrude upon your lordship with any opinion of my own,' he wrote to Lord Bathurst, 'it is but fair I should state it as a positive fact that I never have

yet seen or conversed with any man here, either of consideration or of common talents, who does not at once acknowledge that they are not in that state of society that fits them either for a free constitution or for being left to themselves under any government of any kind.' Maitland's enemies said that he never listened to any man who did not flatter him ; and that it was very well understood that he would listen to nothing that he did not want to hear. So it will be valuable to recall this passage, and compare it with what the Ionians themselves said. We shall be able to do this with better effect when we come to Capodistrias's assault on Maitland, and Castlereagh's defence of him. Continuing this view, however, Maitland went on, 'I have no difficulty in stating to your lordship that under all the circumstances of the situation—looking at it in every point of view (and I believe many of the most sensible men in these Islands concur with me), that it would have been infinitely more for their benefit and advantage had they at once been made colonies to England than left as they are by the Treaty of Paris. This, however, was impossible to be done under the treaty—we had therefore only to endeavour to give them a constitution which could enable us to assure them for the present a better state and condition than they hitherto had been placed in at any former period, leaving it in *our* power to alter and amend it as we might deem advisable—but not placing in their

hands any such power — and this your lordship will perceive is effectually done by the reserving clauses relative to the judicial establishment in the chapter of justice.'

On the general principles that had guided him, he wrote as follows, 'I have always considered the Treaty of Paris as a treaty made between Russia and England for the benefit of the Ionian people, and though, in fact, the other great powers were stiled principals upon the occasion, that in truth they were mere accessories to that treaty.

'The principal upon which I understand the treaty to have been bottomed was the feeling on the one hand that the Emperor Alexander was anxious to repair the unfortunate state in which he had been in some degree the means of placing them, from the necessity he was under of signing the Treaty of Tilsit, and, on the other, a wish to replace them in the condition in which they stood with regard to their liberty and independence antecedent to that calamitous treaty. If I am correct in this, and if it be true that such was the real object of that treaty, it naturally follows that if we did give to them either a better regulated system of government, or an extension of liberty and security they never before possessed, that we had fulfilled both in the letter and spirit the obligation we had entered into with Russia, and that that Court, at least, could not have the smallest pretence for saying that we had stretched the power granted to

us as a protecting sovereignty under the Treaty of Paris. I am fully persuaded that it is unnecessary for me to explain to your lordship the grounds upon which I maintain we have done both the one and the other. It would be a mere recapitulation of what I have said in my address to the Primary Council, but I am sure your lordship will agree with me in this general and incontrovertible sentiment, that definite power, however extensive, is a lesser evil in any State than power alike undefined and uncontrolled.'

There will be many to agree with Maitland's conclusion; there were many when he wrote. But we would hardly say that it is a 'general and incontrovertible sentiment'; and it would have filled the sentimental 'friend of the people,' the Maitland of 1794, with a holy horror.

After dwelling on the very extensive powers that he had reserved to himself, he pointed out that the Ionians would always remain subject 'not to the will of a despot, not to the change from Paul to Alexander, but to the constitutional laws and practices of our kingdom.'

As regards the Ionians, there was among them 'no considerate man who does not acknowledge that no government could ever exist in these Islands without a constant interference of the protecting power,' although it was true that 'the words liberty and independence conveyed to their irritable minds an idea that they could once more open all those seeds of

discord and dissension which had so frequently unhappily tended to their misery and destruction.'

Perhaps those 'seeds' might be 'opened' in the future; but there was little to fear from that, 'for we can always give more to those who go with us than they can possibly expect to gain if they go against us.'

The provision of the constitution which he most feared to see attacked was that relating to the double list of candidates. On this point he related an anecdote. 'In 1806 they tried to alter it—and what was the consequence? that finding a set of men elected the most unfit in the country, they took away the balloting boxes from the place of election; the person entrusted with the business arranged the balls according to the list he had got from the plenipotentiary, and next day produced the balloting boxes—so arranged; and declared the election accordingly, a measure undoubtedly infinitely more destructive of any idea of liberty than any restriction that could have been laid down—and the disgraceful notoriety of this fact was the sole reason why I did not specify it in the Primary Council.'

He concluded his report to Lord Bathurst with an expression of his hope that the constitution, though not ideal, might be found to be workable, and a stepping-stone to a better state of things.

This constitution was ratified in the throne room of the Pavilion at Brighton by the Prince Regent

on the 26th of August 1817. It was Maitland's most considerable achievement, although not that which lasted the longest. It remained in operation until 1849, and was even to the end of our occupation the mainspring of the government; for some of its provisions, inadvertently retained when the constitution was remodelled, were the only means by which the government could be kept going. But to Maitland's successors it proved a veritable bow of Ulysses. Even the rapid sketch that has here been given of its provisions must suffice to show what exceptional qualities were needed to work it effectively. Maitland's invincible energy, impeccable knowledge of men and single-minded devotion to his duty, enabled him to work wonders under it. He stopped leakages of public money, wiped out the deficit, and rolled up a surplus. He scared the nobles into good behaviour, and utterly routed a far more formidable conspiracy than his successors ever faced. He kept the island steady, while the mainland on both sides, the Morea and Naples, was heaving in revolution. The common people arose and blessed his name: for they tasted daily of the consolations of justice impartially administered. But what happened after Maitland is painful to recall. Fortunately it lies outside the scope of this biography.

An attempt has here been made to do something like justice to Maitland's admirable work over the Ionian constitution. We must not shrink from

reviewing the unpleasant story of his persecution of De Bosset: it is, on the whole, the most painful incident of his career. We saw that in the year 1794 Maitland made one of the few speeches that appear to have been prompted by genuine personal feeling—his speech on the enlistment of 'foreigners,' for whom he always had a John Bullish hatred. Later on, I ventured the statement that he often fell to quarrelling out of sheer *ennui*. The two moods jumped together in his persecution of De Bosset. He had had enough of constitution drafting, and he turned to quarrelling as a *délassement*, having no other resources. There was a good subject ready to his hand. De Bosset was a Swiss gentleman who had seen twenty-one years' service in the British army, and had attained the rank of lieutenant-colonel. On the reorganization of the Order of the Bath he had been decorated with the third class of the military Order. At the conclusion of peace he was sent out to the Ionian Islands as Resident in Cephalonia. He was then despatched on special duty to Lebeda, the ancient Ptolemœa Leptis, to superintend the despatch to England of some monuments of antiquity; but was recalled before he could complete his work, and appointed inspector of militia in the Ionian Islands. He arrived on this duty on the 30th of January 1817. On the 17th of March he was despatched in great haste to Parga with a re-

inforcement of 300 men for the garrison, but again recalled within three months. He was then ordered on special duty, to which, for reasons given, he demurred, and was promptly deprived of his commission, and his services dispensed with by proclamation.

This treatment would be enough of itself to show Maitland's animus. He knew well enough, being one of the most successful administrators that England ever possessed, that the grand secret of good administrative work is not to harry your subordinates. Any man not fundamentally incompetent can with assiduity master the duties of his post if he is left long enough in it. But the most brilliant man if incessantly moved about will always find his work beyond him; and five such different appointments in the short space of two years were enough to bewilder De Bosset, who was only a simple soldier, with no pretensions to any but quite ordinary abilities.

Unfortunately there was much stronger direct evidence that Maitland meant to drive De Bosset out of Corfu. De Bosset reported himself to the Lord High Commissioner, and was immediately invited to dinner, and afterwards, on the 6th of February 1817, to a ball. In the ball-room Maitland pointedly and deliberately approached the colonel; and the other guests fell away out of respect and left His Excellency and his victim face to face, with no one

within earshot. Hence we have only De Bosset's word for what followed. But there are such volumes of evidence on the whole case, and De Bosset's word was so continually and fully substantiated, that we cannot avoid noticing his account of this short interview, and indeed it is only too likely a story. 'Colonel De Bosset,' said the great man, 'I am very glad to welcome you to Corfu, and to say that I think you had much better go away. You have many enemies here, and you would do better if you went away as soon as possible.' The unhappy man could only stammer incoherently in reply to so fierce an assault; whereupon Maitland, smilingly and ingratiatingly, with every possible mark of affectionate attention, repeated his menace. De Bosset could only bow, and leave the ball. Next morning he called on the military secretary and asked what it all meant. After so broad a hint, he said, there was nothing to do except to go. Perhaps the Lord High Commissioner had some plan to that end that he might fall in with. But Hankey would not help him. There was nothing in it all, he said; everybody had noticed how drunk His Excellency was, no doubt he had forgotten all about it by now. But no man in De Bosset's position could rest satisfied with such an answer. 'It may be,' he replied, 'that His Excellency was drunk, although personally I cannot think it. His speech was quite plain, startlingly plain, and no drunken man could so command his features as to

threaten me with ruin while apparently he was overwhelming me with compliments.'

But Hankey stood by his chief. Sir Thomas was drunk, and there was an end of it. 'Granted, then,' said De Bosset, 'since you will have it, that His Excellency was drunk, there still remains a proverb that you will be acquainted with, and that I take leave to remind you of, *in vino veritas:* and there is the question to which I have received no answer—How am I to go away?' It is to be presumed that the military secretary had his cue, for he would say nothing. It was not Maitland's intention that De Bosset should be honourably retired; he meant to expel him ignominiously. When this had been achieved, and the quarrel thus artistically rounded off, the unhappy man made his way to England and waited on the Duke of York. 'Nobody,' said His Royal Highness, 'could take away an officer's commission except His Majesty, and the colonel might rely upon his assurance as commander-in-chief that this would not be done without the fullest investigation.'

The investigation went in De Bosset's favour. He had been deprived of his travelling allowance; he was granted two months' pay in lieu of the same by special order from the Horse-Guards; he was provided for on the half-pay list. It became increasingly clear that he had been shamefully bullied, and in April 1818 he was created a

Knight of the newly-established Guelphic Order of Hanover 'for distinguished service in the Mediterranean, particularly in the Ionian Islands and Parga.' It was hardly possible to convey more distinctly to Maitland that his conduct was thoroughly disapproved of. In the meantime, Maitland's justification of himself was called for. It came at great length, and contains much of 'the workings of an ill-regulated mind,' 'disappointment of exaggerated pretensions,' 'total contempt of decorum,' 'disregard of facts,' and so on. De Bosset was not referred to except as 'this fellow,' or 'this person.' This is mere abuse, and there is a curious passage about Lebeda which shows as clearly as possible what a weak case Maitland had. 'The truth is (and I ought perhaps to be ashamed to confess it), that the research for monuments of ancient sculpture never has been to me, personally, an object of the smallest moment.' This is very ingenuous and winning; but as Maitland's taste was not in question, it is totally irrelevant: in fact, he was shirking the point. The report was not well received; and De Bosset was given to understand that his military reputation and his general conduct met with the approval of the commander-in-chief; but that Maitland was, in point of fact, indispensable. The matter did not end here; but although this painful incident could not in honesty be passed over, it is hardly necessary to dwell longer on it. The same year that saw De

Bosset made a K.H. saw Maitland decorated with his second star, the Grand Cross of the same Order; and he was soon deep in his great design for creating a new Order of Knighthood.

In the matter of De Bosset, Maitland cut a sorry figure. In the matter of the most distinguished Order of St Michael and St George, he cut a very grand figure indeed. Yet in the negotiations leading to its foundation he has so written himself down that we would gladly see the correspondence destroyed. But it is all a matter of history by now, and as it is no part of the duty of a biographer to make agreeable selections from his subject's work, we must needs drag ourselves wearily through this long negotiation.

The Order was first suggested as a means for rewarding the services of distinguished Ionians. That being accorded, Maitland proposed to extend it so as to include the Maltese. The sticklers for precedent were all opposed to this measure, as it would set a precedent for inhabitants of other colonies receiving decorations, which was too irregular to be thought of. This was exactly the precedent that Maitland hoped he should set, and exactly what has happened. The Order of St Michael and St George has grown into the great Order of civil merit for the whole of the British Empire; the Indian Orders seem comparatively provincial by the side of it. Perhaps Maitland knew his audience too well to

indulge in so wild a speculation. Be that as it may, he took much lower ground, but ground on which he was perfectly safe. 'As regards Malta,' he wrote, 'the whole point is that this is the only colony of the British Empire where we have succeeded to an actual sovereignty. Hence we live here surrounded by an atmosphere of stars and ribbands,' and the only Maltese who go undecorated are those who are faithful to their King. There was no opposing this argument, and Malta was included as a concession.

The next point was the constitution of the Order. Until the re-constitution of the Bath, English Orders had always been of one class. That would never do here, he wrote; the whole point was to make a man think that he was better than his neighbour, so it was decided that there should be three classes of the Order. The next point was the name. It was first proposed that the order should be called the Order of St Spiridion. That was all very well, he wrote, as regarded the Ionian Isles; but the saint was not 'in such high feather' in Malta. The same difficulty would arise if a Maltese saint were selected; the Corfiotes would not feel complimented. In fact, the two hagiologies were at daggers drawn, and we must find a saint who was equally considered both in the Orthodox and the Roman Church. How would it be if we took the old Order of St John of Jerusalem without the Jerusalem, and added some words symboli-

cal of the occasion, but sufficiently vague not to give offence? It might be supposed from all this banter, banter which was quite out of place, that Maitland was incapable of serious thought on the subject. We should be quite mistaken. The title that he now suggested was the musical and noble name, 'St John of the Isles.' As we know, the name finally adopted was 'St Michael and St George'; St Michael the Prince of Heaven, St George the Patron of England. Then came the insignia. The ribbon ought to be black and red, but so as to show more red than black. We need not trouble about collars. They would only be worn on great occasions, and they would be very expensive, he added, with an eye to Messrs Rundells, Bridge & Rundells's account. If provided at all, they ought to be of silver gilt, and made in England. It would have a most unfortunate effect if it should leak out that we could not make our own decorations. They might make them cheaper in Paris, but, in his opinion, they were unnecessary. The great point was the star, and it must be a showy star. As soon as the sketches of the Grand Cross were sent him, he shook his head over them. The St Michael was much too tame, he said; the St Michael of Raphael or Guido would be better.

But above all things, he wrote, hurry it on. Nobody here believes that the Order is really going to be founded; promises in this country are considered but as air, more to be honoured by violation than

performance, and till the star twinkles in their eyes, we shall never get on well.' Pray let Sir George Nayler (*York Herald* and *Blanc Coursier*) come out before the end of the year. 'You can have no conception of the impatience of these gentlemen;' and when it finally appeared 'there is no describing the enthusiasm of the Ionians over the Order, for they never believed that it would come out.'

As regards the first appointments to the Order, he wrote that he must have a Grand Cross for ——, as he was the leader of the Opposition here, and I bought him with the promise. Then I want two more for —— and ——, as I don't know how to get rid of them otherwise. Pensioning them would be too expensive, and they would not care for a knighthood without something to pin on their coats. In Malta he wanted two more Grand Crosses for the same reason, but as these men were possessed of means, perhaps the Prince Regent would not mind making them counts. That would get rid of them equally well; it would be a valuable exercise of the prerogative, and would save him two Grand Crosses.

A Cabinet Minister, jaded with overwork and harassed by the anxious task of advising his Sovereign on the distribution of honours, may, perhaps, in a moment of irritation express himself somewhat in this manner to a trusted private secretary. But that a man in Maitland's position, charged with the inauguration of the Order, and holding the prophetic

views that we know him to have held for its future, should thus write officially and deliberately of the favours of his master, is surely grossly irregular. His language was not appreciated in England, and he was given to understand this in the way that he would most feel. The nominations that he asked for were allowed as regarded Maltese and Ionians, but when it came to English public servants there was a marked delay : and one officer whom he recommended for a Grand Cross immediately, was made to wait two years for the second class. As regards Ionians and Maltese, Maitland always spoke as if the Order were something trivial and almost discreditable. But when Englishmen were candidates for a decoration, he invariably wrote with dignity, and dwelt on the eminent services of the men he recommended. All this is ancient history, and, until quite recently, secret history ; and if it damaged the Order it certainly would find no place here. But it does not ; it only damages Maitland. In truth, Maitland was now at his best—and his worst ; his best, for reasons already set forth ; his worst, because his savage, Swift-like cynicism was developed to its fullest extent. Not for a moment was his strong head turned by power ; his personal pride was of too sturdy a growth for any work to be either above or below him, and his native capacity was equal to any task. But he had so long played on human nature, and had found the task so easy, that he came to show an almost Napoleonic

contempt for the decencies. He loved to give things their worst names; to do good work, and speak of it disparagingly; to throw out noble ideas, and degrade them in the developing until they almost disgraced him; to reward service and call his rewards bribery; to toss his favours to their recipients like bones to snarling dogs. There might be even worse to say, but this is bad enough; and we are not to suppose that he neglected public decorum altogether. The hall of the Order was opened with great pomp. The three Ionian nobles who carried the constitution to Brighton received the K.C.M.G. Baron Theotoky, the President of the Senate, received the Grand Cross and a special medal from the Prince Regent. Maitland himself condescended to accept the star in diamonds, and an address of thanks which he described as 'the most contemptible thing on earth.'

CHAPTER XIV

THE IONIAN ISLANDS—CESSION OF PARGA

It is a relief to turn to a question—the cession of Parga—where there was no opening for Maitland to air opinions of this kind; opinions which were equally offensive, whether real or assumed.

Parga was a European question as long as it lasted. The chief actors were Maitland and Ali Pacha on the spot, Castlereagh in London, and Liston in Constantinople. The audience included the people (even then a large body) who saw in the modern Greeks the lineal representatives of the Greeks of classic days. We do not need to exercise the imagination to realise what the temper of such an audience would be on such a question. Mavromichaelis's proclamation to the address of the Sovereigns of Europe, dated from 'the Spartan camp,' 23d of March 1821, although published some years after the date we are now considering, strikes the key-note in the phrase, 'Our Mother Country, Greece, whose enlightened genius contributed to your civilisation.' This appeal always tells;

and the reminder that the genius of Hellas contributed to the civilisation of Europe was quite enough to enlist a large body of influential people on the side of the Greeks when they demurred to rendering to the Sultan the things which were his.

Parga was a town on the mainland with some four or five thousand inhabitants, which had formerly been held by Venice, together with Prevesa, Butrinto and Vonizza. It contributed to the power of Venice in two ways. Firstly, it strengthened her hold on the Adriatic, where it was indispensable that she should be supreme; and secondly, it was a convenient opening on the mainland for the export of corn to the Islands, where food often ran short. When the Republic fell, the Islands, as we have seen, became a fief of Turkey, and were garrisoned by Russian troops. The mainland possessions of Prevesa, Butrinto and Vonizza, were occupied by the Turks: but Parga held out. It was, however, clearly laid down by the treaty of 1800 that Parga was to pass over to the Sultan, together with the other mainland towns. They were all specially excepted from the 'dependencies of the Ionian Islands.'

The inhabitants of Parga were mostly Christians of the Greek Church. They gladly submitted to the French when the Islands were handed over to Napoleon after the Treaty of Tilsit. Parga was occupied by British troops on the 22d of March 1814; not by way of asserting its dependence on

Corfu, but because the French garrison of Parga was a menace to our new possessions. When the limits of these possessions came to be defined, the treaty of 1800 was taken as the basis of the new arrangements. There was, therefore, not the slightest doubt that the Sultan had the right to summon us to retire and admit his garrison. But the situation was a difficult one. It is easy enough, from this short review of the facts, to see what a good case could be made out by Philhellene enthusiasts. Here was a town that had gallantly held its own (the Turks said 'rebelliously') against the Moslem. It was actually held by a British garrison. Was the King to withdraw his troops, and leave these fellow-Christians to the mercy of their ancient oppressors? This was a very touching appeal and a very powerful appeal. Maitland did not like the duty of acting in defiance of it. 'I cannot help thinking the cession of Parga as a most unfortunate, though possibly a necessary measure,' he wrote. It was not that he had any sympathy with the Parganots. It was not that he shared the delusions of the Philhellenes. On the contrary, the principal difficulty in conducting his government was 'the exaggerated notions entertained of the virtue and patriotism of the Greek people by travellers fresh from college, and full of classic imaginings.' His reluctance to cede Parga came from his far-sightedness. He saw that the Philhellene craze was only in its infancy. A tremendous impulse to its growth

could be given if the Greeks could denounce us as the betrayers of the Greek cause. It was the kind of temper that might lead anywhere; and in point of fact it did, in the end, lead to our ignominious withdrawal from Corfu. He would have given a great deal not to be compelled to stir in the matter of Parga. What he hoped was that the question might be allowed to rest until our rule in the Islands was demonstrably to the advantage of the Greeks. A very few years would suffice for this; and we might then be able to laugh at rhetoric. But the Greeks, and the Greece in our midst, were far too keenly alive to the value of a strong agitation with a good cry to allow any such sensible delay. Nor did the Turks give us much help. There had been 'painful incidents,' as Castlereagh called them, in the other ceded districts; and agitators did not fail to remind the public that this fate and the other were all that Parga had to look for from the Turks. If it had not been for these 'painful incidents,' Parga would have been handed over unconditionally, and our garrison withdrawn five years before.

As it was, however, we could not afford to neglect the outcry that daily grew louder, and we approached the Porte with proposals. In truth it was a very thorny question to handle. We had no right to make proposals at all. Turkey was as much entitled to occupy Parga as England to occupy Corfu. Indeed, the two powers had identical treaty rights in the two

places; and if Turkish officers had only conducted themselves with common decency in the neighbouring towns of Prevesa and Vonizza, there would have been no opportunity for England to make conditions. As it was, we offered to evacuate Parga if the Turks would compensate any Parganots who might be desirous of emigrating. The Porte took this proposal very ill; and showed by several small disobliging acts that they did not like the insinuation. Later they expressed the Sultan's views with particular clearness. There would have been no talk of emigration, it was said, if England had not put it into the Parganots' heads: and this seems a reasonable statement. The Porte was amazed that England should think it worth while to quarrel with a friend of five hundred years' standing for a parcel of rascally Parganots. This was a most unpromising temper for our ambassador to deal with; and there was nothing for it but to drop the matter for the moment.

We were able to approach it soon after from another point of view. Parga lay within the pachalik of Janina. The vazír Ali had long been growing in wealth and importance, and was by now far too powerful to be agreeable to the Porte. It was true that the inclusion of Parga would add considerably to his influence. But it was plain that England was bent on getting money for the Parganots; and it would be more convenient that it should be paid out of Ali's private purse than out of the treasury at

Constantinople. Moreover, if any undertaking had to be entered into, it would be less undignified for a principal governor to make terms than for the Grand Vazír to do so. Besides consulting their wounded pride (and the Sultan's ministers were mortally affronted), this turn of affairs enabled them to forward a separate scheme. Ali Pachi had long been too powerful; his ruin was now resolved on, and the manner in which he met the English demand for compensation would be a valuable indication of his resources in money. These were supposed to be fabulous, and in point of fact were considerable; but how considerable was not precisely known at Constantinople. But this was only half the scheme. It was hoped that Ali would be so elated by his new acquisition that he might be led into some act of rebellion out of sheer over-confidence; and this was well calculated.

The negotiations on our side were entrusted to Maitland. He paid Ali Pacha a visit, and was received with great magnificence. The proceedings had to be opened with present-giving; and Maitland, casting about for some appropriate gift, discovered incidentally that his *protégés* the Parganots were far from popular. It fell in this way. The usual presents of slaves it was not within Maitland's competence to offer. The pacha was reputed so wealthy that a gift of money or money's worth would have been commonplace. Only some object of rarity would make a

favourable impression ; and fortunately Maitland had such an object ready to his hand. He had recently become possessed of a fine young lion almost full grown ; and he sounded Ali's secretary and agent as to whether the lion would be an acceptable present to the pacha. The secretary said that nothing could be found that the pacha would be better pleased with ; and then he was silent for a space. Maitland pressed him to repeat his opinion, as he really wanted to know the pacha's views, and the secretary was the only man who could communicate them. The secretary repeated, 'Nothing would give the pacha greater pleasure except one thing—to let the lion loose on the inhabitants of Parga when he had got him.'

The Porte had rightly calculated that Ali Pacha would make no objection to paying a round sum of money if he could include Parga in his pachalik ; and if the English chose to call it compensation to the Parganots they would be welcome to do so. The actual sum that he paid was 633,000 dollars. The Porte consented to recognise the Septinsular Republic as soon as we retired from Parga, and the evacuation took place on the 22d of March 1819, after an occupation lasting five years. Maitland had made a very good bargain ; although best was bad, for the evacuation at once led to a violent outcry against him in England, and to a considerable increase in the ranks of the local agitators in Corfu ; both of which results added to his already serious difficulties. Four

thousand starving Parganots (it was reported in England), martyrs in the cause of Greece, exiles who had abandoned their homes rather than submit to Turkish oppression — 4000 of these saintly and noble creatures had been compelled by Maitland's conduct to leave Parga and take refuge beneath our flag, where they were even now living on alms, in spite of the indemnity that had been paid over to Maitland for their benefit. The numbers were not greatly exaggerated, considering the circumstances; for there really were as many as 2700.

'They are very great rogues,' Sir Frederick Hankey reported during Maitland's absence on duty in Malta, 'very fat, well-fed and *rich*. They sold out of Parga at a good profit, and are successful usurers and even somewhat bullies.'

CHAPTER XV

THE IONIAN ISLANDS—CAPODISTRIAS *v.* MAITLAND—CAPODISTRIAS AT CIRENCESTER — CASTLEREAGH AT CRAY—THE CABINET SUPPORTS MAITLAND

We must not forget that all this time Maitland was Governor of Malta. In that capacity he was confronted with the difficulties arising out of the last occasion when Barbary corsairs plied their trade in the narrow seas.

On the morning of the 16th of May 1817, H.M.S. *Alert* sighted a Tunis cruiser carrying eleven guns and a crew of 130 men off the Galloper. Her movements were watched, and she was observed to be boarding every vessel that passed her. Two vessels were lying to at no great distance. The *Alert* hailed the corsair, who was quite prepared to show fight; but thought better of it as the *Alert* drew near and disclosed her armament. Questioned about the vessels lying to, the Tunisian denied all knowledge of them. But these vessels were boarded also and turned out to be the *Ocean* of Hamburg, homeward bound from Charleston with cotton and rice, and the *Christina* of Oldenburgh, outward bound with a cargo of wheat; both vessels

had prize crews on board from the corsair. The case was perfectly clear, and the corsair was ordered into Margate Roads. Her fellow-corsair was soon afterwards run down and captured in the Downs.

This outrageous piece of buccaneering had been attempted under deliberate instructions from Tangier. Only Hanseatic vessels were to be boarded ; inasmuch as Barbary was at peace with all other nations. They would probably have got clear away with their two prizes if they had not waited to make a third capture. This information was obtained from a Norwegian on board one of the corsairs. He had been captured and forcibly converted to Islam, and now gave his evidence at the risk of his life unless he returned to Norway, which he was promised permission to do. The German diet was, of course, much incensed at the outrage, and Maitland was written to on the subject of obtaining redress. The question was raised at a very awkward moment. The Barbary consulates had long been in an unsatisfactory state, and Maitland's negotiations would have to be conducted through our consul at Tunis, Colonel Oglander, a man whom the Bey would long ago have dismissed from his court if he had dared to do so. For Oglander would not kiss the Bey's hand. 'He is eternally harping upon not lowering his consequence,' Maitland wrote angrily ; and instead of thinking about the business of the consulate, thinks of nothing but 'the foolish nonsense of kissing or not kissing the Bey's hand :

ridiculous and absurd stuff!' It seems that the Bey, though exercising the functions of royalty, was only the son of the titular monarch, and a younger son at that. 'He has been on his precious throne for only a year, owing to the murder of his elder brother.' Perhaps for that very reason he was the more tenacious of outward marks of respect; and he hated Oglander for refusing them to him with all the hatred of an affronted Moslem. Consequently, when Maitland was directed to obtain satisfaction for the outrage off the Galloper, he felt that it was almost hopeless to get anything done through the consul; and in fact his request was very roundly refused, and a long string of complaints and counter claims was sent in.

This would never do; for the excitement in Frankfurt was considerable, and redress must be had at any price. It is remarkable that the Bey should have shown so bold a front, for only a year had passed since Lord Exmouth's bombardment of Algiers. But he seems to have been in one of those states of anger and wounded pride that are hardly accessible to reason. Maitland determined to try him with a special mission. Careful as he always was of the dignity of officers of whom he could not get rid, he included Oglander in the mission, and joined him with Hankey and Spencer. He sent a man-of-war with them, as 'a display of force is desirable.' The question of kissing the Bey's hand was discussed in the special instructions

to the mission, and Oglander was advised to comply with the custom if the other consuls did so. It appeared that they did, with one exception; and this point being really the root of the whole difficulty, the mission had an easy task to perform. Their instructions went back as far as the year 1682, and were based on the 8th Article of the Treaty of Algiers, signed in that year. But though all these goodly points were duly gone into with the Bey's ministers by the embassy, the battle was won at the outset by Maitland's politeness. The importance of receiving a special mission gratified the Bey; he was appeased by having his hand kissed, and the rest did not really matter to him. He did, indeed, threaten to send a return embassy to England, but the question was evaded without giving offence, and the peace of the Mediterranean was preserved.

Constantly moving backwards and forwards between Corfu and Malta, bringing his despotic power to bear, with the shortest possible delay, on any irregularities that he might encounter, Maitland had by now hewn both these most troublesome communities into shape. Something like order had taken the place of the wild anarchy that had preceded him. If the difficulties that he overcame have not been already made sufficiently clear, there will be nothing gained by enumerating them. Although they were troubles of quite an exceptional kind, the amount of work that they entailed was not perhaps very greatly

in excess of that thrown upon many colonial administrators in difficult times. But we now approach an incident quite without precedent, and calculated to disturb even the strongest nerves. Ordinary colonial officials have their chief, who may be exacting or petulant or (which is worst of all) indifferent; but beyond this control there is nothing. If they have factions to deal with, their part is done when they have satisfied their chief. If there are questionings in Parliament, there are the proper officers of state to answer for the service. Maitland, as we have seen, had numerous factions to dispose of; and he had dealt with them all to the satisfaction of the Cabinet. But this, which would have ended most men's anxieties, was only the commencement of his own. He now had to watch Capodistrias do his best to discredit him in England with the Cabinet, and drag his policy, if possible, before the House of Commons.

Capodistrias was a very important person indeed; the Secretary of State to the Czar Alexander, and wielding the authority and information of the Cabinet of a great European power, perhaps the greatest European power; and he was determined to break Maitland if he could. Maitland, as we saw, was perfectly aware of this, and had spent a great deal of time and attention on the family of Capodistrias. To us, and now, the time would seem to have been, if not actually wasted, at any rate unnecessarily bestowed. But Maitland thought very differently.

Great though the difficulties were that he had surmounted, he forgot them all when he thought of Capodistrias. 'The only evil we ever had, or shall have, in these islands is the family of Capodistrias.' 'He wants to rule the Ionian Islands from his armchair by a sort of *imperium in imperio*.' 'It is plain that what he wants is to have me removed. In that event the sooner England retires the better, for she will never be able to establish another government.' This fact had been thoroughly grasped by the Cabinet, who were fully resolved to stand by Maitland in the coming struggle. There was no need for Capodistrias to learn it as a lesson, for he had been a principal actor in all the scenes of misgovernment at Corfu, and knew perfectly well what the curse of his native land was. His bearing was the more reprehensible. 'I have now for four years been living on the top of a volcano,' wrote Maitland when the danger was actually over, although he did not know it; 'perfectly unaware when the explosion would take place. My life is a burden to me, but I would prefer to sacrifice it rather than that the intrigues of this despicable charlatan should injure the honour of England.' At this time he was writing with a copy of Capodistrias's memorial on the affairs of the Islands in front of him. 'It is a scene of insolent and profligate assertion,' he wrote; 'Capodistrias must know all the time that every word is false.'

This very remarkable man was variously described.

Maitland called him a despicable charlatan. Princess Lieven spoke very differently of him. 'Capo d'Istria has just arrived in England, and I cannot say how much I regret you do not know him. You have no notion how fully he merits the hatred Metternich bears him. He is a very superior man, both in heart and head; he has a noble intellect, and in short is as worthy of your esteem as he is of the hatred shown him by certain others.'—*Princess Lieven to Earl Grey, 17th August* 1827. 'Well, my dear lord, had you and Count Capo d'Istria met, you would have found in him a man of honour . . . but before all you would have recognised in him an ardent patriot who all his life long has only had at heart the cause of his country's independence. . . . Never has a good cause had a better man to advocate it; so noble and honest by nature, backed by so great a power of eloquence and of so commanding an intelligence.'—*The Same, 12th September* 1827. But besides the fact that (as the wife of the Russian Ambassador) the Princess could hardly avoid eulogising the Russian Secretary of State, that very astute lady probably chose the characteristics that she supposed would most commend a man to an English noble without any precise conviction that they fitted Capodistrias. 'Despicable' he certainly was not; but perhaps he was a charlatan in the sense that he acted a part well—the part of disinterested patriot. But who was Maitland to call another man a charlatan? He had just completed the inauguration

of a new and august Order of Knighthood, and completed it with every outward mark of decorum and magnificence. No one bore himself in more stately fashion in public when he chose to do so than Sir Thomas Maitland. But all this time he was pouring unbounded ridicule on his own performance, savagely denouncing the men he proposed to decorate, openly writing of the great Order as a mere means of corruption, and chuckling over the influence he was acquiring at an outlay of £1183, 16s.—the amount of Messrs Rundells, Bridge & Rundells's account. For a man who has just by his own confession completed the most monstrous piece of charlatanism to denounce another man as a charlatan is a valuable indication of character. Blindness to our own faults in other people makes the kindly critic : but blindness to other people's faults in ourselves makes the inflexible man of action, and such a man was Thomas Maitland.

Maitland acted honestly and well, but did himself prodigal injustice in speaking and writing. Capodistrias was unexceptionable in speech and in correspondence, but his actions have a queer look. One would hardly call him a gentleman, and his dishonesty was of that childlike kind that is almost engaging. His patriotism was of a sturdy growth, although deeply tinged with personal rancour and disappointed ambition for his family. But he died for it, and in his death he vindicated both himself and Maitland, for, as President of Greece, he was knifed in the streets

of Athens by the men for whom he had undergone so many toils. Nor did his tragic end come before he had, from his own observation, pronounced his fellow countrymen to be unfit for the government that Maitland would not give them.

But all this took place eleven years after the date we are now considering—the end of the regency. Maitland and Capodistrias were still mortal enemies, and the latter was hastening from St Petersburg to lay the complaints of the Capodistrians before the Cabinet of England. He bore autograph letters of introduction from his master to the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh. They caused a good deal of anxiety to Lord Liverpool at Walmer Castle and Lord Castlereagh at Cray. It was on Castlereagh that the duty devolved of replying to his complaints, but the interviewing was done by Lord Bathurst, whose stolid composure was rather diverted than disturbed by the fireworks of Capodistrias, and who was a good deal tickled at Count (afterwards Prince) Lieven's obvious anxiety lest Capodistrias should say something that might leave a legacy of discomfort behind him for the Russian Ambassador after he himself had returned to his chancellery.

Both Secretary and Ambassador went down to Cirencester and stayed with Lord Bathurst together at his country house. The Russian Secretary of State poured out his complaints, and left behind him the written memorandum that had so aroused Maitland's

ire. Strong though Maitland's language was, it was not too strong. Capodistrias's attitude was thoroughly dishonest from first to last. Nobody knew better than he what the Ionians owed to England. He had come of age under the government of the Venetian Republic, the meanest and most degrading of despotisms, and he had borne a leading part in every succeeding government until he took service with the Czar. His experience of larger politics, and the saner outlook on Europe that any man not radically defective in intelligence must have acquired who had played a part in the Congress of Vienna, cannot but have shown him where alone the Ionians could look for a decent form of government. The only honest part for him to have played was to have washed his hands altogether of Maitland's enemies, and to have cordially supported the Lord High Commissioner; that is, if he really cared so much as he professed to do for the happiness of the Ionians.

He commenced by complaining that the Treaty of Paris had been infringed by the mode in which the constitution of the Ionian Islands had been drawn up, and the manner in which government was administered under the new constitution.

To this Castlereagh replied that if ever general latitude had been left to a man it was so by the words, 'shall regulate the forms of convocation of a legislative assembly, of which he shall direct the proceedings, in order to draw up a new constitutional charter.'

It is true that subsisting authorities were left for the time, but that was only for carrying on the business of the government until the charter was settled. In drawing up that charter, no doubt consideration should have been had not only for the habits and customs of the peoples, but also for any particular form of government for which they may have had a preference. Such consideration, Castlereagh maintained, had been duly paid by Maitland; and on the other point (the question of the attachment of the Ionians to certain forms of government) he quoted with damaging effect Capodistrias's own words as Secretary of State to the Septinsular Republic—'The primary cause of the late calamities of the Ionian Islands is to be ascribed to the Constitutional Code; . . . people will accept without questioning whatever comes from the adored hand of Alexander.' The people could hardly have had a more open mind; and they were rewarded by the constitution of 1803. This was not in working long enough for the people to have become attached to it. 'But,' quoted Castlereagh ruthlessly, 'Your Excellency's sagacity appears to have convinced you at an early period of some of its defects;' for in Capodistrias's own letter to the Ionian *chargé d'affaires* at St Petersburg he had written that 'by an enthusiastic admiration of abstract principles with a disregard of facts, a work had been completed, beautiful perhaps in the eye of a solitary philosopher, but not adapted to answer the wise views

of a father of a numerous but indocile and uneducated family.'

This, then, was Capodistrias's own view of the constitution of 1803: it was defective, and had no time to get itself mended before it was swept away. If alterations had been made in it, Capodistrias was the last person who ought to complain. The assertion that those persons were elected to the legislative assembly who received the fewest votes (which, if it meant anything, implied that Maitland tampered with the ballot boxes), Castlereagh denounced as 'positively false;' and indeed it was a very impudent assertion. The complaint that Maitland had too much power was skilfully met by a renewed reference to the Treaty of Paris, under which the Lord High Commissioner was granted general latitude. Moreover, such power 'frees the Islands from elements of abuse which always lurk in undefined power.' As for the grumbles that Maitland was 'irresponsible,' the petitioners simply did not understand the British Constitution. The Lord High Commissioner was a servant of the Crown; and all servants of the Crown were answerable to Parliament. This was a piece of 'bluff'; for an appeal to the House of Commons was, at this moment, precisely what the Cabinet were most anxiously dreading. However, Castlereagh had such a good case on Capodistrias's memorial that he thought he might risk it. On the groans about the 'military despotism' of England, no better comment could be

offered than the language of the Ionians themselves, when Russian and not British troops were in question. They said 'the nation themselves were unfit, from their known habits of insubordination and violence, to be loyal and obedient republican soldiers; and that if the troops could not be Russian, they must be foreigners of some other description.' But, strong though this passage was, Castlereagh continued to quote relentlessly, 'the Russian soldiery were the life and soul of the State, that it was to them that they were indebted for security of person and property, that they were solicited and longed for as a gift from heaven, and that if they were to depart it would involve their complete destruction, and leave no other alternative than that of drowning themselves in the surrounding seas.'

Such fervid self-abasement left no more room for deploring the military tyranny of the two or three battalions under Maitland's command. But Capodistrias's memorial went on to declare that the garrison ought, in part, to have been Ionian, and that the Lord High Commissioner had deliberately ignored this condition of the treaty. A simple reference to the 5th article disposed of this complaint, and as regards this and the succeeeding grievances, Castlereagh quitted the defensive and ventured a rather more militant attitude. 'I think I shall have no difficulty in convincing Your Excellency that an attempt has been made to deceive you by a strange perversion, or an utter mis-statement

of the facts.' He was now approaching that part of the memorial which dealt with the grievous results of Maitland's unconstitutional behaviour; and the first complaint was the vague one that the people were discontented, and longed for the good old days of Venetian rule. As to discontent, Castlereagh said there never was a State yet established where there was not some, and the amount of restlessness was not greater under British domination than under the sway of our predecessors. But that the Venetian Republic should be held up as a model to England was, indeed, a matter of astonishment. For, quoted Castlereagh, did not the Secretary of the Septinsular Republic (none other than Capodistrias himself, when he was eighteen years younger) describe that government as one of 'corruption, vice and imbecility!'

These crushing quotations from Capodistrias's early correspondence were rapidly stiffening Castlereagh's style, and he now ventured on a description of Venetian methods of government which was only too accurate. When stripped of the polite circumlocutions of diplomacy, it amounted to this—that it turned the nobility into a band of legalised brigands, and placed the rest of the population under their feet. This was, of course, the favourable position from which Maitland had ejected them, and that he was determined they should not re-occupy. One of their great sources of profit had been that they had farmed the revenues. This most lucrative privilege they had

long enjoyed, and therefore, wrote Castlereagh, it would have been most improper to deprive them of it suddenly. But he was quite unable to agree with Capodistrias that the matter had been handled roughly. On the contrary, he considered that this vicious system had been continued too long for the good of the State, and if Capodistrias thought that 'due attention had not been paid to those who have the honour of being connected with Your Excellency's family,' he could only point to explicit cases where they had been handled with exceptional tenderness.

But the gem of the despatch was Castlereagh's reply to the complaint that native Ionians were passed over in public appointments, and lucrative posts conferred on 'foreigners.' To meet this, a list of all the public servants of the Islands was added to the despatch. From this it appeared that there were no 'foreigners,' except a few Sicilians in the Sanità and Customs. Here it was indispensable that native Ionians should not be employed, for the same reason that coastguardsmen in England are preferred who have not local ties. Such ties very often impede them in the course of their duty; and the habit of passing over natives was well understood throughout the Mediterranean to tend to the efficiency of the service. The allusion to 'foreigners' gave Castlereagh an opening of which he gleefully availed himself. For Capodistrias was quite as much a 'foreigner' at St Petersburg as any Italian could possibly be at Corfu.

'But, after all, if any instance could be produced of any of these foreigners holding a high official situation, I am sure that His Imperial Majesty has had too much experience of the advantage which he has derived from the service of eminent men, not natives of Russia, to entertain any apprehension that the employment of a foreigner in a public situation is necessarily calculated to prejudice the interests, or can be regarded as derogatory to the honour of an independent State.'

This is the venerable schoolboy retort, 'Foreigner yourself!' gaining considerably in force by being clothed in stately and courteous diplomatic phrases.

Already in the course of his despatch had Castlereagh had occasion to point out where Capodistrias had stated the precise contrary of the facts. He now had to deal with a very flagrant mis-statement. Capodistrias had made the heavy charge that the Ionian people were, under English rule, for the first time kept in perfect ignorance of revenue and expenditure. Castlereagh adduced Maitland's published statement of accounts, and added that it was the 'first public statement of the receipt and expenditure of the Ionian revenue which was ever made to the people under any of their numerous constitutions; and I must here take the opportunity of expressing my regret that Your Excellency did not condescend to avail yourself of the offer made by the Lord High Commissioner to give any explanation which you might desire with regard to any of the proceedings of the Ionian govern-

ment. It is true, I find upon inquiry, that he made the offer only once, but his apology is that he was not encouraged to repeat it by Your Excellency observing that you had never read the constitution ; from which he not very unnaturally concluded that either, as His Imperial Majesty's Minister, you abstained from all possible interference with the internal proceedings of the Islands in rigid conformity with the 2d Article of the Treaty, or that, for some other reason, you had decided to have no communication with him on the subject.'

Before closing the subject of Capodistrias's memorial, we may conveniently digress at this point, and notice what was the actual system followed by Maitland in the matter of appointments. It was an anticipation of that now followed in Egypt by Lord Cromer ; as few Englishmen as possible, and those picked men. They must be in influential positions, so as to penetrate the public service with the traditions of sound work and devotion to the public interest. But it was particularly desirable that they should be as little in evidence as possible, so as not to 'teaze' (a word of which Maitland was very fond) the people with the constant reminder of the 'foreigner's' presence and influence. The residents in each island were Englishmen. It was on these indispensable functionaries that the very heavy duty fell of compelling the feudal chiefs to pay that respect to the law that they had always refused under other governments. In fact,

the law had been, in Venetian days, the principal instrument of their authority. In remote islands, and surrounded by their own people, these nobles were all-powerful but for the residents. The greatest of this useful body of men was Charles Napier, who was selected for the Residency of Cephalonia, not more on account of his inflexible uprightness, than because of his despotic temper. This temper, almost a reproduction of Maitland's own, made him an ideal official for dealing with the schemes of arrogant and hitherto uncontrolled nobles in their own country, and his work was exceptionally fine. After dealing with the question of appointing 'foreigners' to places of trust, Castlereagh proceeded to examine in detail the various charges (one being a very gross charge of misappropriation of public money) against Maitland, and concluded, 'Your Excellency will, I trust, pardon me if I altogether decline entering into any examination of the means by which the memorialists propose to improve the existing constitution. It is sufficiently evident that what is meant by improvement is the utter subversion of all that has been done under the treaty of 1815.'

It is hard to say what can have induced so able a man as Capodistrias to expose himself to so severe a rebuff, and to so detailed an exposure of the aims of his party. It can only be surmised that he expected to overawe the British Cabinet. He may have calculated that the personal intervention of the Czar

Alexander, joined to a very natural unwillingness to take so much trouble as was involved in Lord Castlereagh's despatch, would dispose the Cabinet to remove Maitland. But whatever his calculations may have been, the actual result of his journey to England and of his attack on the Lord High Commissioner was to strengthen Maitland's hands prodigiously. To the youth of the Ionian Isles, Capodistrias was a figure of almost legendary renown: his power was supposed to be second only to that of the Czar himself. If their champion could effect nothing against Maitland, it was clear that they would do well to make their peace as soon as possible.

Accordingly we are to observe that at a time when the Mediterranean was a scene of bloodshed, rebellion and civil war, the Seven Islands, formerly the wildest and most turbulent spots in the Mediterranean, remained in profound peace. With one foot in Malta and the other in Corfu, King Tom stood out as the visible embodiment of a *Pax Britannica*. He bestrode the Mediterranean like a Colossus. Brigand-nobles, like those whose ruined castles fringe the Rhine, men who but five years before had been despots in their island fortresses, were now harmless and even useful citizens. Either they had entered the King's service, and dwelt apart from their lands, discharging the duties of their well-paid posts and decorated with the great Mediterranean Order; or else, if they were not to be so lured away, they lived peacefully on their estates, scared into

good behaviour, and fearful lest by misconduct they might forfeit what local influence was still remaining in their hands. Here was a wonderful change indeed; it was almost the difference between the Scotland of 1745 and the Scotland of 1845, between the Germany of Anne of Geierstein and the Germany of Little Lilliput. Maitland's work would have been sufficiently remarkable if there had been no temptations to the Ionians to resist him. But besides the intrigues of Capodistrias which have just been noted in such detail, we shall only half appreciate Maitland's magnificent achievement if we do not consider the state of the surrounding countries.

CHAPTER XVI

THE IONIAN ISLANDS—REVOLT IN THE MOREA—ATTACKS ON MAITLAND IN PARLIAMENT—GROSS MISREPRESENTATIONS OF JOSEPH HUME

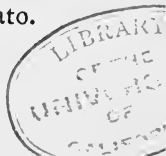
FERDINAND of Naples, who spent his life in being expelled with ignominy from his capital and in returning to it amid thunders of acclamation from his fickle subjects, had just been expelled and restored for the last time—on this occasion by the force of Austrian arms. Writing of the state of Italy in 1821, soon after order had been restored, Maitland compared it to 'the quiet and tranquillity of one of those receptacles of human misery where, when the keeper appears, all the maniacs are in highest regularity and order;' the keeper here being the Austrian Emperor.

Maitland was in a position to judge, for he was writing from Rome, where he had gone at the invitation of Cardinal Gonsalvi to treat of the Church affairs of his double charge. Under his grim metaphor it is easy to see that the state of society was exactly that which most tempts adventurers; and the Ionians were adventurers from the beginning. But under Maitland's rule there was

more money to be made by staying at home quietly than by risking one's neck in foreign revolutions, and a far better chance of enjoying it, when made, than the Ionians had ever known before.

If the state of the Italian coast of the Adriatic was alarming, that of the Turkish coast was appalling. On the 20th of May 1820, Ali Pacha declared himself independent. For two years he maintained his power against the Sultan's forces, and by the time that he was assassinated, on the 5th of February 1822, the Balkan Peninsula was in flames from end to end, and that great civil war was set on foot which only closed with the foundation of the state of modern Greece. Here were disorders far more serious than those of the Italian peninsula. Moreover, they made a constant and direct appeal to the passions that most moved Ionians: their hatred of Islam and their desire for independence. First of Ali Pacha. He was an Albanian, nominally a Moslem, but hardly more than an occasional conformist. He greatly attracted Charles Napier, who was an enthusiastic Ionian at heart, and who paid visits to Ali, advised him on military matters, and drew up plans of defence. In fact, he offered to take command of the insurgent army and march on Constantinople if it were made worth his while to throw up his commission in the British army. It is a most singular comment on the temper alike of Ali and the Greeks that they could not bring them-

selves to the small outlay which this implied. For £30,000 or £40,000 they would have commanded the services of a first-rate soldier. As for their resources, the Greeks drew easily on the London money market, and Ali's private fortune was not less than five millions sterling. Ali was eighty years of age when he revolted, and his avarice was unparalleled. It was in the end his ruin. He could not be persuaded to pay his soldiers, who slowly fell away from him. He could not bring himself to make a reasonable offer to the Porte, which was quite open to one; and the result was that instead of marching on Constantinople, as Napier had undertaken to do, he was gradually hemmed in by the Sultan's troops. Napier's conduct was watched in England with some curiosity, not to say suspicion. But there was no real cause for uneasiness. Besides the fact that both Ali and the Greeks were too avaricious to make Napier independent, there were other excellent reasons for not employing him. The Greek insurgents would never have consented to put so much power in the hands of an Englishman: they were far too vain and greedy of power for themselves. They took everything that was offered them as a right, and not as a favour. 'The Greeks generally appear to have considered the loan as a small payment for the debt due by civilised society to the country that produced Homer and Plato.



The modern Greek habit of reducing everything to a pecuniary standard makes Homer, Plato and Co. creditors for a large capital and an enormous accumulation of unpaid interest.' It was the same with service. Napier was at liberty to ruin himself for the Greeks if he chose; but in return he would receive nothing but the approbation of the insurgent leaders for conduct which would have shown that he was not insensible of the debt that he owed to the country that produced Homer and Plato.

Ali was equally grasping. It was not the support of a single officer that he desired, but the support of the whole nation. He frequently sounded us as to whether he might count on the British navy in his coming struggle with the Sultan; but there was no hint of any advantage that England was to gain by such a course of action; it would have been sufficient reward to have helped Ali.

Ludicrous though this attitude is, it is not perhaps entirely incomprehensible to us to-day; but whatever extravagances may still be committed in the name of the country that produced Homer and Plato, they are as nothing to the extravagances committed three-quarters of a century ago. Lord Byron committed a good many, but Byron was a sober and practical statesman compared to Frederick North, who had now succeeded to the Earldom of Guilford, and who went about the Islands masquerading as Plato,

with his hair done up in a gold band, and arrayed in flowing purple robes. Lord Guilford had lavished money in the Greek cause, and was particularly anxious to see a theatre built in order to revive Greek tragedy. But alas! Greek tragedy was no more to be revived by building a theatre for it than North could make himself like Plato by tying his hair up with a gold braid.

But when two peers of England, both of them public men, and one of them the greatest living man of letters, could make themselves publicly absurd in the name of the land that produced Homer and Plato, we may imagine how smaller men were carried away by the same wave of enthusiasm. We may also imagine the stimulus which this kind of talk and behaviour gave to those fiery spirits whom it was the business of Maitland's life to keep in order. He had had to teach the Ionians the elements of sound commerce and sound finance; he had had to drill them in elementary notions of government and justice. He now had to show them the meaning of the word 'neutrality.' 'Neutrality,' he wrote, 'is a thing that no Greek understands; he must always be meddling.' The 'meddling' in this case was nothing else than a conspiracy, with its centre in Corfu and branches in all the Islands, to second the Greek rebellion on the mainland. 'If the British Government had not been strong and steady, it would have succeeded,' he wrote. But this is his modest way of saying that,

for the most part, the Ionians were terrified at Thomas Maitland. He commenced his enforcement of neutrality by forbidding Turkish vessels to put into Ionian ports to refit. This measure was thoroughly approved in the Islands. But his next measure was received with boundless indignation. This was nothing less than to order the disarmament of the Islands; Corfu being ordered to disarm last as a compliment to the Corfiotes' loyalty. He was only just in time; and in two islands, Zante and Santa Maura, disturbances actually broke out.

As much as possible was made of both by the enemies of British rule at home and abroad. 'This' they said, 'is what comes of despotism. This is what happens when a noble and high-spirited people are ground down by a shameful tyranny, all careers closed to them, and all their lofty impulses thwarted.' It is submitted that under the circumstances the proper comment would have been, 'If these things happen under Maitland, what would have happened without Maitland?' There was one execution in Santa Maura, and there were five in Zante. In the latter island the neutrality of the port was violated, an officer killed, and for a time things looked serious. This was because there was a local head for the uprising in the person of Count Martinengo, who was the richest man in the Ionian Islands, and had been a disturber of the peace of every government that had been established there since the fall of Venice.

The disturbances following on the revolt in the Morea gave him his first chance of playing this part under British rule, and he seized it; in spite of being seventy years of age, a time of life when men mostly are rather fain to contemplate revolutions than to lead them. But the evergreen turbulence of the Greek temper, which led Ali into revolt at the age of eighty, broke out in Martinengo at a comparatively early age, and he played his part with considerable vigour. He had, however, underrated the change that had taken place in the state of society. In former days the poor people had to do whatever a man of Martinengo's wealth commanded them to do. Or, if they disobeyed, they did so at the risk of their disobedience being remembered against them. But now the poor people were much too comfortable, and much too secure in the fruits of their labours, to revolt at the bidding of any man. As for the risk of disobedience, it had disappeared; for the law, as they very well knew, was afraid of nobody. Still greater was the change in Zante from the days of Martinengo's youth when he came to consider the nobles. Formerly they stood by each other, and lived on their estates; but in Maitland's time some were in Corfu, and others hoped to get there. Of those that remained some were disaffected, truly, but a few really admired a stable government; and of those who did not, some were too scared to run the risk of rebelling against it. In fact, Martinengo was out of date, and his revolt came

to nothing. He fled to the Morea, where he was followed and arrested by the order of Sir Frederick Adam, the deputy of the Lord High Commissioner, who was administering the government in Maitland's absence at Malta.

This was very characteristic of Adam, and it gave much annoyance to Maitland. It looked like a strong measure, and was in fact a very feeble one. Nothing could have been more convenient for the government than that Martinengo should have run away. He would only be welcomed by the rebels for the sake of his money; and as a forfeited rebel to the Ionian government, he would be unable to get at it, and would soon find himself in miserable circumstances. This was the punishment that he would most feel, and without a doubt he would soon be begging forgiveness. He might then be restored to his estates on our terms, and would be harmless for the future. In the meantime, we should have avoided the odium of the prosecution to which we were now committed. Such a prosecution would certainly have one ill effect, and might have two. It would infallibly give Martinengo an opening for posing as a martyr-patriot, and it might even break down altogether for want of evidence. Maitland's reluctance to prosecute was misunderstood by Martinengo. He thought it a favourable moment to make proposals; and while Maitland was hesitating to prosecute, because he feared that the good of the State might be damaged

by the trial, Martinengo imagined that he was waiting for an offer. He had precedent to go upon; for this was not the first time that he had been tried for his life, and on the previous occasion he had found no difficulty in buying his pardon. The offer that he made is the most eloquent testimonial that was ever rendered to Maitland's devotion to his duty. Martinengo seems to have perfectly appreciated the difference between the Lord High Commissioner and his Russian predecessor. He quite understood that jewels and lands, castles or simple cash bribes would stand no chance of acceptance with Maitland. But knowing Maitland's zeal for the service, he offered firstly to keep Volterra (a Capodistrian agent) out of London; secondly, to show us how to recover the Church moneys (which had disappeared, and were concealed under a cloud of intrigue that Maitland had always failed to penetrate); and thirdly, to throw in his influence definitely with the English cause, on the single condition that he himself might be made a senator. A very considerable bribe indeed; and there have been crises when such offers must be considered. Maitland knew (and Martinengo was well aware of it) that Martinengo was the only man in the Islands who could render to the State these invaluable services. But the Lord High Commissioner merely observed that 'so profligate a degree of insolence and threat' settled the matter, and the trial must immediately be proceeded with. Privately, however, he was much vexed at

having his hand forced ; for he had very grave doubts as to whether the power of the nobles was sufficiently curtailed for it to be possible for him to obtain any evidence. In the latter respect Maitland did his own system less than justice ; evidence in plenty was forthcoming, and Martinengo was tried and condemned. The greater part of his punishment was remitted, and he was restored to his estates.

But the incident was ominous. Justice was done, and mercy shown ; but a vast amount of friction had been incurred, and much unpleasantness. It was all the difference between a man of first-rate capacity at the head of affairs, and a man of something less than second-rate capacity. Sir Frederick Adam was to succeed Maitland as Lord High Commissioner, and after Adam came a long line of Adams down to the disastrous 2d of June 1864. Never again were the Ionian Islands to have another Maitland for their ruler.

It is difficult for us to realise the tempests of passion and hatred that raged around Maitland during the closing years of his life. Brigandage, the sheltering of those who were obnoxious to the law, the smuggling of provisions, and especially of arms, every form of violated neutrality, in fact—these deeds, which were strictly forbidden to the Ionians, were to their minds not only harmless, but positively laudable diversions ; and when performed in the cause of Greece and Greek independence—sacred duties. But if the Ionians raged,

Maitland raged also. It was one man against the Islands; but the Ionian anger was as the anger of children beside Maitland's. He had been absent in Malta at the time of Martinengo's flight, but had hurried back; and, now at Corfu, now at Santa Maura, wherever his presence could be most effective, he spent his days in enforcing that neutrality that the Ionians were bent upon violating. We should also add, which they were encouraged to violate; for while the Sovereign of the protecting powers was neutral, the people of England were violent partisans. English money came pouring into the insurgents' camp; and explanations were haughtily demanded by the Porte. How is it possible to explain to an Oriental mind that government are of one opinion and the people decidedly of the contrary? Our ambassador did the best he could to explain away the subscriptions; but with only partial success. England in the person of the Lord High Commissioner was fiercely enforcing neutrality; but by the purses and the speeches of her subjects, she was doing her best to render neutrality impossible.

Under any man but Maitland it would have been impossible. There were regular bands of Ionians serving with the Greek insurgents, and calling themselves 'the army of Zante,' 'the army of Cephalonia.' One body of emigrated Parganots banded themselves together to recapture Parga; 3000 Ionians altogether were serving with the army of the Morea. Sometimes

these redoubtable patriots came to blows with the Turks; and when they had run away, they expected to settle down comfortably in the Islands. But they received the most unpalatable order to quit within ten days. The less numerous sympathisers with the rebellion in Naples were also expelled; and the result of this energetic dealing with incendiaries was that some measure of confidence in us was restored at Constantinople. The resentment still cherished against us by the Turks for our behaviour about Parga was enhanced by their mortification at seeing the Greeks financed from England. It was quite possible that unless Maitland inflexibly enforced Ionian neutrality, he would find some difficulty in compelling the Turks to keep outside the four-mile limit. A 'Turkish cruiser' had been a terrible visitor within the memory of many living men. How if, exasperated by the rebellion, there should come a time when Turkish captains were given to understand that any little irregularities on the Ionian coasts would not be too critically examined at Constantinople? This was the danger that the hot-headed Ionians were drawing down upon themselves; and this was the danger that Maitland was resolved, at any cost, to avert.

A very gross breach of neutrality occurred at Santa Maura, and the Porte haughtily demanded compensation. Maitland promptly acceded to their claim, and, to the infinite wrath of the Ionians,

mulcted the Septinsular treasury in £60,000. He was equally prompt in demanding compensation when the Ionians were affronted. Two Ionian sailors were taken off a ship, carried away prisoners to Prevesa, tortured and executed. Instantly Maitland filed his claim for compensatory damages to their families, and his claim was admitted and settled without delay. These incidents, thus told without detail (which would be merely wearisome), implied a heavy strain on the Lord High Commissioner, and long and harassing correspondence, for in every case promptitude was of the essence of the affair. If the Porte became suspicious of Maitland's intentions, 'incidents' would multiply with such rapidity that it would have been impossible to deal with them. If the Ionians imagined that Maitland either could not or would not obtain redress for their wrongs, they would promptly have betaken themselves to that revenge which was the only justice they had known for centuries. For many months every hour was a crisis, but Maitland's vigilance and energy met every danger as it arose. As the war went on, a 'Greek fleet' was called into existence, and duly made its appearance in the Ionian seas. Maitland was not sorry to see it, on the whole, as its chief object was to find out whether or no the Islands were really disarmed. They were welcome to any information on this head that they could elicit. They were duly warned to keep outside the four-mile limit,

and the approach of the Turkish fleet quickened their movements.

While Maitland was toiling in the Mediterranean, enforcing neutrality with an iron hand, and doing his best to assure to his Sovereign the mastery of the sea-way, it will be in the highest degree instructive if we very rapidly survey the criticisms passed on his work in Parliament. To act with one eye on the House of Commons is a check on the actions of an imperial officer, and sometimes a wholesome check; but there has always been, and it seems that there always will be, a little knot of members who make it their business to represent every deed in the most unfavourable light. To conciliate these men is not possible. A man may do what is just and expedient, but nevertheless, if there be a way of so handling the matter that it can be made to look unjust and inexpedient, in that way will the matter be handled. In days gone by Maitland had himself been a chief sinner in this respeet. Very early in his Mediterranean career, and at intervals throughout its entire length, he was to suffer the punishment that he had himself inflicted upon others, the punishment of hearing himself totally misrepresented while his own lips were sealed, and while even his defenders in the House were unable, for cogent reasons (connected with the service and diplomacy), to give the real grounds for justifying his actions.

Never were there reasons more impossible to give publicly than in the case of the Ionian Islands. We have seen with what a network of complications and intrigues the Ionian question was surrounded. We have seen with what mingled force and dexterity Maitland threaded his way through the maze; how many pitfalls he avoided, and how at last under the Treaty of Paris he evolved something like a stable government through the quasi-despotism with which he succeeded in investing the Lord High Commissioner: the stepping-stone, as he called it, to something better.

His work was not made easier for him by Sir Charles Monck, who moved, on the 21st of May 1816, 'That a committee be appointed to inquire into the present political condition of the Ionian Islands, and to report their opinion thereupon to the House.' The grounds for this motion were the lamentable misbehaviour of the British forces in occupation of the Islands; a behaviour which had been exceptionally reprehensible. Nor was that all; Sir Charles understood that a sort of government was about to be established that would be grossly unjust to a 'great and considerable nation' (the Ionians). First and foremost he denounced the position to be occupied by the British commissioner, who, it appeared, could actually have the power of directing the proceedings of the legislature, an intolerable interference with national rights and independence. 'Would you, sir,'

he continued, addressing an indignant appeal to the Speaker, 'sit one hour in that chair' on such terms. Of course the allusion was to Speaker Lenthal; but the parallel of the President of the Legislative Assembly of the Ionian Islands with Charles I's Speaker was somewhat forced. How would it work out if carried a little farther? We should have Capodistrias for Cromwell, and Mocenigo for Hampden. Perhaps some sense of the absurdity of the appeal stole over the minds of the Commons, for the motion was negatived without a division. When once the constitution was established, there was no single question that gave Sir Thomas Maitland so great anxiety as that of the cession of Parga. We have seen how unwillingly he approached it, how clear were the rights of the Turks, and yet how reluctantly the Lord High Commissioner admitted them—foreseeing the inevitable parliamentary debate. It was just the kind of question that attracted Sir Charles Monck; he seized on it with a pleasure that he avowed to the House. The Parganots were 'an interesting people,' 'struggling for freedom,' and he was sure the House would not refuse them its 'sympathy and compassion.' Their surrender to the Turks would be 'so abominable that he could not suppose any British minister would give it his sanction.' 'These spirited, free, independent patriots' were now about to be deprived of 'all that made civil society valuable.' The stress was applied to us, as we have

seen, by a treaty obligation; but Sir Charles passed lightly over that as an 'unfortunate clause,' and then proceeded with his speech amid thunders of applause as if the clause were non-existent.

On this occasion (26th May 1819) he only moved for papers, a motion to which Lord Castlereagh at once acceded.

The cession of Parga was resolved on, and it duly took place. In June following there was a short debate on the subject, a debate of which the most marked feature was the tribute paid to Maitland's 'distinguished ability and humanity;' a tribute paid not only by Lord Castlereagh, who was Maitland's official champion, but also by Sir James Mackintosh. Mackintosh was strongly opposed to the cession, and made a statesmanlike appeal to the House on the subject. But though he was of this mind, he expressed his opinions with moderation, and punctiliously paid a tribute to Maitland's character as that of a gallant officer whom he well knew to be 'a humane and honourable man.' He thus pointedly dissociated himself from the Moncks and the Humes: and as we said in the case of Ceylon, he was perfectly capable of appreciating Maitland's work. He dissented from that part of it that was concerned with Parga as a gentleman and a statesman, and not as a raving agitator.

Maitland's next assailant was a man of the latter type. On the 23d of February 1821, Mr Joseph Hume rose to move an inquiry into the revenue and

expenditure of the Ionian Islands. Mr Hume was a very earnest advocate of retrenchment in public expenses. He was a man of means, having amassed no less a sum than £40,000 during his short career of seven years in the Civil Service of India, from which he retired in the year 1807 at the age of thirty. He was thus both well and ill equipped for the part of financial reformer: well equipped in that he was himself independent, ill equipped in that his independence had been attained by very dexterously availing himself of alarming irregularities in the administration of the empire. When he set up as a financial purist, he might therefore very properly have been bidden to look first at home.

Mr Hume had earned for himself a reputation as a disinterested public man. But when we study his speeches and compare them with original documents describing the state of things he professed to be surveying, we can only marvel at the facility with which such reputations are earned. He commenced his assault by stating that the revenue of the Islands 'had originally been adequate to all the charges upon it, and their government was conducted upon the principle of a regular and systematic economy.' On this statement the only possible comment is that when we assumed the control of the Islands there was no government existing as we understand the word government. Neither was there a 'revenue,' nor

were there 'charges' upon it. Every man scrambled for what he could get, and the strongest got the most. The only 'principle' animating public life was the principle in which Mr Hume had acted when building up his own fortune—the principle of availing himself of opportunities of filling his own pocket. As for 'regular and systematic public economy,' there was nothing in the Islands that was either regular or systematic, and there was no attempt at economy. In fact, his preliminary statement was a deliberate and elaborate falsehood. The rest of his speech was in line with the opening sentences. He stated that Maitland had taken £10,000 from the treasury for his star of St Michael and St George; whereas it was only after twice refusing the offer that the Lord High Commissioner had consented to accept a star worth one-fifth of that sum. He abused him for living in a 'palace,' whereas he lived in a 'palazzo'—a very different building. Even in his 'palazzo' he only inhabited two rooms, and gave up the rest to the public service. The rest of the speech is all in this vein. Castlereagh and Goulburn replied, and warmly defended Maitland from the charge of jobbing in the public service. Mr Joseph Hume charging Sir Thomas Maitland with jobbing! It is a very pleasant incident.

Six months later he was in even finer form, for he moved for an inquiry into the conduct of Sir Thomas Maitland. It is hoped that in the preceding

pages there has been no attempt to magnify unduly the character of Sir Thomas Maitland, or to glide over awkward incidents in his career. The truth has been told so far as lay within the author's capacity; the position has been ventured that the sole animating principle of Maitland's life was 'the safety, honour and welfare of His Majesty and his dominions.' In the course of his duty he came face to face in the Ionian Islands with a state of society that has hardly been glanced at in this volume. In one sentence, it was as if a section of the Rhine country had been cut out of the Middle Ages and planted in the Grecian Seas. The 'Teutonic paste in our composition' enables us to realise quickly enough what the state of society must have been like. A thousand tales and romances have come to the aid of sober history and told us of the robber barons with their troops of vassals, their violent feuds, their lusts, their revellings, their fleecing of the poor, their intrepid rebelliousness. Because the Ionians bore soft Italian or glorious Grecian names we think that they were very different men. The words 'lord' or 'vassal' call up visions that are not to be easily associated with sparkling seas and sunny skies. Still harder is it to realise that the incomparable grace, the almost Oriental charm of manner, the elegant speech and the superb intelligence of the Ionian noble covered passions as fierce, and a longing for revenge as ruthless, as any that raged

and were sated in grey castles on pine-clad heights in the valleys that run to the Rhine.

To rule such a society at all is hard; to rule it without an overwhelming military force is monstrously hard; to rule it constitutionally is impossible. One may draft a constitution, but it is in spite of, and not in consequence of, that constitution that order will be maintained. We have seen how Maitland achieved the impossible. All human nature lay open to him as a book, and on the passions, the fears and the hopes of man he played, until, in the nineteenth century, and in the eyes of all the world, he had hammered and welded into order a society that came to his hands straight from the fourteenth.

Mr Joseph Hume proposed to criticise this performance. He said that it was 'more odious than the tyranny of Turkey or Persia, and was a disgrace to England.' Maitland was 'nothing less than a Roman proconsul, the alpha and omega in every proceeding, with the advantage of screening himself from responsibility behind his underlings:' and without a man in some such position, as Mr Hume had quite sufficient intelligence to understand, society would have dissolved into its elements. Nevertheless, he went on, he pledged himself to prove 'such a system of misrule as must excite the indignation of every good man, and he could only, if his motion could be refused, appeal to the House as a witness of his endeavour to prevent the disastrous consequences

of rebellion and civil war which must ensue in these Islands if Sir Thomas Maitland was allowed to act the tyrant.' Particular instances of Sir Thomas's despotic behaviour were given to the House, but Mr Hume's hardest words were reserved for the case of Count Martinengo, whom he described as 'one of the richest and most respectable inhabitants of the island.' Rich, Martinengo undoubtedly was, but respectable? Perhaps he was also a respectable man; but he was a good many other things as well, as we have seen. The lenient treatment that he received was denounced by Mr Hume as the last that could be considered acceptable to so 'high-minded' a man.

It is very disagreeable to Englishmen to think of the post-office being violated in any interest, most of all in the governmental interest. But when Mr Hume denounces Maitland's secret police as a system of 'revolting espionage,' one asks whether there was no 'revolting espionage' on the other side of the account? To sum up, the English system of government was 'disgraceful to England, it was cruel to the Ionians, and on the heads of these who supported such misrule would be the blood that would be shed.'

Even so does the hired incendiary implore the mob not to nail their victim's ear to the pump.

Mr Hume wound up with the usual peroration about public duty, and after having grossly mis-

represented a King's officer throughout a long speech full of the most damaging and wounding insinuations, begged the House to believe that he had had no intention of hurting the Lord High Commissioner's feelings.

Mr Goulburn replied, dwelling on the 'very vulgar error in this country to call all systems of government tyrannical and oppressive which did not exactly resemble the British, although they might be much more suitable to the people among whom they were introduced.' To demolish Mr Hume's falsifications was a matter of no great difficulty, and Mr Goulburn wasted no time over them, concluding, 'the honourable member had charged Sir Thomas Maitland with a proneness to adulation, a fondness for show and parade, and, in fact, with supporting bribery and corruption. He was aware,' he continued loftily, 'that the high and meritorious character of that gallant officer could gain little from his advocacy,' but while repelling the charges against him, 'he did not feel it necessary to put the general character or the public service of that gallant officer in opposition to those charges.'

This was a very handsome defence, but it was followed by a very unhandsome attack from Mr Bennet, who told with Hume in the division that followed. It was a very able speech, much shorter than Hume's, and deserves quoting *in extenso* as a model of unscrupulous and intelligent attack, although it

could not have been made by any member who cared either for the comfort of the Ionians or the good of the King's service. It amounted to this, that the Ionian constitution was an indecent sham. In a sense it was a sham, but it was a very creditable sham, and if it has not been already justified in these pages, there is nothing more to be said. Mr (afterwards Sir John Peter) Grant, who became Chief Justice of Calcutta, took up the very judicial attitude that he was sure that Maitland's conduct only needed explanation, but that as the motion implied a censure, he should certainly not vote for it. The speech of the evening was made by Sir Isaac Coffin, who was put down for the Earldom of Magdalen by William IV. Sir Isaac said, 'He had known Sir Thomas Maitland thirty-five years, and a more able and gallant officer did not exist.' That was, in effect, all the answer that Hume deserved, but he rose and replied in a very angry and ill-mannered speech, grossly abusive of Maitland, and highly inflammatory of Ionian unrest. It is gratifying that he only carried 27 members of the House with him, as against 97 who voted against his motion.

Maitland had two chief enemies, beside a whole crowd of lesser men; the two chief were Capodistrias and Hume. It is remarkable to observe with what little effect these two most intelligent men attacked him. It is a profound tribute to Maitland's instinctive sagacity that when Capodistrias attacked him, he only

succeeded in making himself absurd, and when Hume attacked him, he only succeeded in showing himself abusive and ill-tempered. But, in fact, it was not because Maitland's measures were bad that they were attacked; it was because they were successful. Capodistrias had the saving grace to confess himself in the wrong before he died, but Hume remained to the last impenitent. We may do him the justice to believe that his motives were not personal. He always protested that they were not, and we may accept his protest. He did his best to get up a full dress debate every year on the conduct of Sir Thomas Maitland. From the most important of these (that of May 1822), we learn what Maitland's pay was. As Governor of Malta, £5000; as Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean, £3500; as Lord High Commissioner, £1000; as former Governor of Ceylon, £1000; and he also commanded a regiment. Mr Hume (who would not be likely to understate it) estimated his income at £13,000 a year. On this he had to keep up quasi-royal state in two places. Is this to be considered an excessive sum?

At the present day the salaries of many colonial governors are scarcely regarded as more than a contribution (sometimes a considerable contribution) towards their expenses. There seems to be no general dissatisfaction with this system, although there are obvious set-offs to its advantages. But the value of money has fallen so greatly in the course of the last three-quarters

of a century that we must not suppose that Maitland was underpaid because on the same salary he would be underpaid now. In Maitland's day £1000 a year was private means, £3000 a year would support a baronetcy, £10,000 a peerage. With £13,000 a year and two governorships to keep up, he was therefore adequately paid, but hardly more than adequately.

If one were to believe Mr Hume, we should conclude that the financial abuses of pre-revolutionary France were nothing by the side of the financial abuses of Corfu. One grows somewhat fatigued with the incessant denunciations of the constitution as 'one of the grossest delusions and most unblushing impositions that was ever submitted to the consideration of an intelligent people.'

'Shameful' it was for 'England to be thus held up to the censure and derision of all Europe.' The cession of Parga was 'one of the darkest blots on our national reputation.' 'Every act of our government was distinguished by violence and tyranny.' 'The bare relation of them made the blood boil, but the endurance of them was ample motive for the Ionians to make every exertion to throw off a yoke so unjust and so onerous. The wonder, indeed, was that these brave islanders, under such aggravated oppressions, had not made greater efforts to free themselves from such an odious bondage.'

Thus judiciously and patriotically did the leader

of the Radicals urge the Ionians to treason and rebellion.

It does indeed make one's blood boil, even three-quarters of a century later, to read the mischievous nonsense that Mr Hume thought proper to spout in the House of Commons.

Nothing was more certain than that without Maitland's disarming order the Ionian Islands would have been in flames from end to end. Thousands of lives must have been lost, and civilisation destroyed for the time. How does this course of action, at once vigorous and humane, commend itself to Mr Hume? It was 'an act inflicting the deepest disgrace upon the whole population, for to them to be without arms was a badge of slavery.' He further had the impudence to assert that Maitland was abusing the enforced neutrality for the purpose of favouring the Turks, and on Lord Londonderry challenging the statement, Mr Hume said that he had no proof, but that 'in the nature of things it must be so.' After prolonged vituperation he wound up with the usual expression of hope that he had not expressed himself offensively. There was more ground covered on this than on any other occasion, and several questions were raised more keenly at issue than the single question of Sir Thomas Maitland's honesty. A much larger body of opinion, therefore, followed Mr Hume; but his motions were rejected by 152 to 67.

CHAPTER XVII

THE IONIAN ISLANDS—INTERNAL AFFAIRS—CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE — THEIR WINNING MANNERS — THEIR FAILINGS — SUDDEN DEATH OF SIR THOMAS MAITLAND

It will have been observed that throughout the foregoing debates Mr Hume always assumed that the Ionians were the same people in essentials as the English. He assumed that the same measures would gratify them, that the same language would be understood in the same sense by both peoples; that what was right and wrong at Clapham would be found to be right and wrong at Paxo. This is the common error of these facile critics; but Mr Hume is the less to be excused for it, in that he was no stay-at-home. He had spent a good deal of time in the Islands, and had had ample opportunities of studying the Ionian character. It was, of course, Greek in basis. A shepherd of Ithaca would allude to 'my ancestor Odysseus,' as if there could be no possible doubt about his descent. This assumption of descent from the heroes of the ancient world, and consequent presumed inheritance

of their qualities, was pushed forward with much pertinacity and ability by the agitators of the time, as we have seen. On the strength of their country having produced Homer and Plato, the modern Greeks have been allowed a long credit in every sense. Without being swept away in a whirlwind of enthusiasm for Hellas, like the 'semi-delirious lords,' Guilford and Byron, as De Quincey called them; nor on the other hand descending to the contemptuous abuse that too many Englishmen indulged in; let us try to realise the Ionians of Maitland's day as nearly as we can.

'The merry Greeks are worth all other nations put together. I like to see them, to hear them; I like their fun, their good humour, their paddy ways. As to cleanliness, they cannot brag. Yet they don't love dirt like the Venetians; they only suffered it out of politeness when the last were their masters, and are now leaving it off in compliment to us; all their bad habits are Venetian; their wit, their eloquence, their good nature are their own.'

This passage from Charles Napier's private notes (1825) gives the Ionians a good character. The parallel with Ireland is noteworthy, and perhaps explains this excerpt from the diary of a confessed admirer of the Greeks forty years later—'I hear that a whole family of five persons have been just assassinated at Zante by an act of vengeance in that land of frequent homicides.' This is another side to the

Ionian character, and perhaps enables us to fill in the outline a little. Passionate, merry people these Ionians, with a capacity for nursing hate, and a total indifference to animal suffering, as the following incident shows us, 'All of a sudden, a number of lambs were dragged along and had their throats cruelly hacked at the thresholds of houses in the best streets of the town. Some of these creatures were ten minutes, or more, in parting with their lives, tortured in honour of the Greek passover.'

Their family feelings were strong. The charge of loose morals is one which every nation levels at every other, and it has therefore become a perfectly ineffective charge; and as a guide to national character, the inquiry is worse than useless. But this contrivance (unique surely) at the Foundling Hospital of Corfu deserves mention. 'There is a circular box for the reception of babies. It revolves in a hole in the outer wall on a spring being touched, which at the same time causes the bell to be rung.' If we compare this contrivance (so carefully calculated to avoid embarrassing interviews) with the uncompromising notice outside Captain Coram's institution in London, we shall find food for reflection. In religion the Ionians were divided between the Greek and Roman Churches; but to both Greek and Roman Catholic the very name Protestant was a term of reproach, and their behaviour to the Jews was a scandal. 'I have just prevented a massacre of the Jews here, all got up for

the love of Jesus,' says Napier, describing one of his earliest experiences in Cephalonia. The treatment meted out to Jews is an infallible index to the state of civilisation attained by a country. 'Every country gets the Jew it deserves' is an impeccably accurate guide. Ask in any land, 'How do the Jews fare?' and the answer is a condemnation or not, according as the Jews fare ill or well. In the Ionian Islands they were treated rather worse, until the advent of the English, than in other countries of Europe. It is not ignorance alone that this distorted habit of mind points to, although ignorance in plenty was to be found among those who should have been the people's guides; as witness this story of Charles Napier and the new Bishop of Cephalonia. 'We have got a bishop appointed; an excellent, pious man, who formerly lived by sheep-stealing, which he now calls his *pastoral life*. His depth of learning and length of beard are alike admirable: he piques himself on a thorough knowledge of the canon law of Justinian, which chiefly rules the Greek Church, and he assured me that the said Justinian wrote the Code Napoleon out of friendship for Buonaparte, as they had been at the school of Brienne together. Disputing this fact, I asserted that Justinian was King of England in the reign of Solomon, and that an ancestor of mine had been sent to Jerusalem to teach logarithms to the architect who built the temple. This greatly disturbed the bishop's theory as to Brienne.' If this was

the ignorance of the learned, what was the ignorance of the peasantry? But a very clear distinction must be drawn between the nobles and the populace. The nobles may, to a very small extent, have shared the ignorance of the people, and no doubt they had shortcomings of their own in addition. But they were the only hope of the Islands. They had the habit of rule inherited from long centuries of undisturbed authority under the Venetian Republic. They were naturally at home in places of responsibility; but they required most careful watching and constant curbing. To train this dishonest but highly capable oligarchy into a band of administrators who would feel that the peasant's cause, rightly understood, was their own—this was a large part of Maitland's duty. Ignorant, bigoted, revengeful, but merry and affectionate, very clannish, very talkative and, as we shall see, superstitious, and totally destitute of any notion of what may be meant by the word truth: such was the Ionian plebs. First of their superstitiousness. Let us take this account of a Greek christening by a Philhellene.

'Except the officiating priest and his attendant boy, I was the only person present who was not a relation of the family. The brother of Lascarato officiated as godfather. The ceremony commenced at four P.M., and lasted about an hour. It was a truly tedious, and I may say without exaggeration a disgusting affair. The priest gabbled over a great number of prayers in a most irreverent and unimpressive manner.

Perhaps this was the custom ; but it is possible that he considered it useless to pray for the child of an excommunicated man. The uncle godfather held a large lighted candle in his hand throughout the ceremony. His chief task appeared to be the answering of numberless questions. The proceedings were opened by a long exhortation by the priest to the devil, who appears to be considered as especially present and active on such occasions. Amongst other performances the dirty little boy who officiated as clerk squeaked out the creed three times successively, with the most wonderful rapidity. The last twenty minutes of the ceremony were actively employed in torturing the baby. After various crossings and benedictions, it was stripped naked and carried in a cloth by the nurse. The priest then burnt a quantity of incense, and poured plenty of oil into a large iron caldron previously half filled with tepid water. His reverence now seized the baby and plunged it three times into the caldron. The shrieks and piteous moans of the victim may be easily imagined. It was laid, still naked, on its back, and the priest, with a piece of rag soaked in oil, crossed its face, breast and stomach. After this it was turned on its face and the same ceremonies performed on its back. It was now put in a cloth, which was held by the priest at one end and by the godfather at the other. In this hammock-like position the baby was carried three times round the caldron and incense pan. It was then handed to the godfather

by the priest, and passed on to the mother, and finally to the nurse; all of them successively kissed it. I cannot pretend to recollect all the details of the baby's martyrdom, but the above description of what I do remember will give the reader some idea of the cruel barbarity of a Greek christening. The enlightened parents would of course have gladly dispensed with such abominations. But for the sake of the legal rights of their child it was necessary to conform to the custom, and to leave everything to the priest. Lascarato assured me that children are usually very ill for some days after their christening. But my only surprise is that they do not frequently die.'

The Ionians were, of course, at liberty to indulge in these and any other disgusting barbarities that they chose; but when we are called upon to admit that the people who can tolerate this kind of procedure at the christening of their offspring are our rivals in civilisation, we can only demur. It is partly with the object of pointing the difference between the two peoples — English and Ionians — that this ceremony has been recounted at length. But it is most instructive as an illustration of Ionian superstitiousness. The core of the ceremony is indeed the familiar baptism, but the whole is so overlaid with incantations as to be scarcely recognisable as a Christian ceremony. If superstition had still so firm a hold on a ceremony so dear to mothers—the most interested in abolishing superstition here if anywhere—we may

infer what chance there was of ousting it from occasions when the leverage of human feeling was less powerful. It is hoped that by now some few hints have been given of the nature of the peoples over whom the English were called to rule. The conclusion of the most sympathetic of all English visitors to the Islands, the man who was as much admired and respected by the Ionians as any Englishman of his day, was this. 'In my opinion,' wrote the Earl of Orkney, 'constitutional ideas as cherished by Englishmen are simply absurd when applied to modern Greeks in their present state of incomplete civilisation. The best form of government for them for at least the next fifty years would be, I am convinced, an enlightened and popular despotism, if such a thing were possible.'

This brings us back to Sir Thomas Maitland, the work of whose life it was to establish just such a government. There is not much more to be said. 'King Tom's' career was now rapidly nearing its end. But Maitland was not one of those who 'first die atop.' To the end his brain was as clear and as vigorous as at the beginning. If there is any sign of failing force, it is a tendency to repeat himself in his despatches. His writings have a very rage of emphasis. After pouring out twelve folios on the conduct of Mr Jabez Henry, an officer with whom he quarrelled, he says, 'But enough of this, to sum up;' and then proceeds to add another twelve folios in the same vein. But this is rather an error of style than a

piece of senility. One would almost say that his vigour seemed to grow with his difficulties, since, with the Mediterranean countries in flames all round him, with the most violent attacks being continually made on his policy in England, with the multifarious complications of the Ionian constitution to be dealt with, far from cutting short his correspondence, he seemed to delight in making his despatches as exhaustive and detailed as possible.

At the close of 1823 he betook himself to Malta. He was much abused for not spending more time there, and it was stated in the House of Commons that he only put in 309 days' residence at the seat of government in the course of six years. There was no answer made to this charge, and in point of fact none was necessary; for Malta did not suffer by the governor's absence, except, perhaps, socially. It is easy to understand why this should be. He had had three years of Malta before he took up any other duties. During that time he had got the government into working order on sound lines, and all that Malta needed was time. As regards the work of his two charges, there could be no comparison. Malta was one, the Islands were seven. Malta was a crown colony; but nobody could say what the Islands were. Malta could easily be controlled from Corfu, but Corfu could by no means be controlled from Malta. The never-ending unrest of the Barbary States, however, took him to Malta, and on Saturday, the 17th

of January 1824, he had a long conference with Sir Richard Plasket. He then dictated a despatch on the subject. 'We shall be teased for ever if we are not firm' with the Barbary States. Macdonell, our consul at Algiers, was much to blame for the existing confusion. He never made even a pretence of reporting to Maitland, as was his duty. His conduct was most indecent and insubordinate, and he would certainly have been suspended if Maitland had had a man-of-war handy. After his morning's work, the governor walked across to the house of Mr Le Mesurier, the chaplain of the forces. At half-past one he was seized with a fit of apoplexy. He at once became insensible, and by half-past ten that night he was dead, never having recovered consciousness except for a few seconds from the moment of his seizure. So died Thomas Maitland in the full heat of battle, with the harness on his back, as he would have wished to die.

The following account of the last ceremonies, hitherto unpublished, is from the pen of an eye-witness and staunch admirer :—

'On Monday the body was removed to the Hall of Saint Michael and Saint George, and there laid in state until the morning of the funeral. The utmost solemnity attended this. The room was day and night lighted by tapers ; an *aide-de-camp* was constantly at the head of the coffin, and on a table at the foot were placed three cushions bearing the

insignia of the three different orders with which he had been invested.

'Wednesday the 21st was the day appointed for his removal from these last offerings of worldly honour and respect to the solitude and silence of the grave. The many who were from their situations obliged to attend, and the multitude who voluntarily did so, met at the Palace at half-past one on that day. The procession was then arranged, and minute guns marked its progress. The service was read in most sincere and deep distress by Le Mesurier, and three volleys fired over his grave announced the completion of that barrier which was to shut out for ever to our mortal eyes this exalted, revered and most justly-beloved personage.

'It is not for such a pen as mine to presume to speak of Sir Thomas Maitland as a public character. As a private one, his praises are best established by the deep and most deep grief which his removal has engendered, and never, I do believe, was a more efficient tribute to the excellence of a dying master offered to Him unto whom all hearts are open, than was on that wretched night to be traced in the sorrowing countenances and stricken hearts of the many faithful servants and friends who surrounded his dying bed, and who thus saw themselves, by the fatal work of a few short hours, deprived of their fairest hopes for future days, of all their support and enjoyment of the present ones.

'Still, amidst it all, there is for all food for consolation. "To all men it is appointed once to die." The moment ordained by Almighty God on the present occasion seems to have been almost set apart for the purpose of concentrating into itself the many and various proofs which long years and distant quarters of the globe have produced of his public and private usefulness and value. He had returned from England, having gained a complete triumph over calumny and falsehood, and that without any interference of his own or of his friends. His own capacious mind fully penetrated the weakness of his opposers, and it was far beneath the dignity of his character to call in any other influence than the slow but sure progress of common sense and the power of his own unblemished name.

'The peaceable state of this island had long borne testimony to the wisdom of its Governor, and his return to it now was marked with double welcome from the expression of his intention to make Malta in future his head quarters, and this, too, heightened by the contrast between his present satisfactory state of health and spirits, with the very impaired one in which he had left us in the spring.

'After remaining a short time here, he found himself obliged, by some important business relative to repairing the fortifications of Corfu, to repair thither for a few weeks, and he probably, too, thought it expedient to pay the compliment of an early visit to

a State which, bad as in itself it certainly was, had yet, like all other governments in which he had been engaged, yielded not only its most inherent feelings, but even its most determined character, to his wisdom, his determination and to his mildness. All this His Excellency could not but feel with an honourable pride, and one of his last letters from Corfu, dictated in his usual expressive language, said, "We are all here in a state that, if any man had told me five years ago I ever should have seen these islands in, I certainly should have considered him a fool or a madman—quiet to the last degree. The courts shut, for they have nothing to do, and instead of murder and crimes of the most atrocious nature we have not now enough for a common Justice of Peace to execute."

'His country, his Sovereign and his governments were thus all bearing testimony to his wisdom and abilities, and he was permitted to depart in the fullest lustre of both; and his friends, in the midst of the deep grief which their own personal feelings of deprivation cannot but indulge, must yet feel a pride and consolation in the consideration of his having done so, and that every feeling but those personal ones, mingled with the remembrance of him who is gone, must be such as to call for thankfulness instead of sorrow.'

'Sir Thomas was a mortal of strange humours and eccentric habits; but it is due to the memory of that

able man to say that his government bore the impression of his strong mind. "King Tom" was a rock; a rock on which you might be saved or be dashed to pieces, but always a rock.' So wrote Charles Napier of him. It has been attempted to give in this volume a more detailed estimate of this very great man, in whom savage scorn for mankind was wonderfully interwoven with a delicate and even tender consideration for weaklings. He died unmarried; whatever tenderness his nature contained was poured out so long as it lasted, and as occasion arose, on officers suffering wrong or indignity. But this gentler side of his character appears but little after Ceylon days. It was swallowed up in pride of achievement and contempt of men. We may say literally that 'his heart was in the service.' 'A rock' he certainly was for stubbornness, but it would be difficult to find a simile for his furious energy. In this sketch there has been no attempt to describe his private life. It is generally admitted to have been remarkable in many ways. But this biography is the life of a public man; and with his public career (it is submitted) the public alone are concerned. This is not said in order to screen Maitland from harsh criticism; in so far as his public career was concerned, everything he did that was of questionable taste has been as fully dwelt on as those actions of his that call for admiration.

But in biography, as in architecture, whatever is not a strength is a weakness. How, for example,

does it strengthen our conception of Napoleon I. to know that the sight of a hair in the butter turned him (like a good many other people) sick? It simply distracts our attention from the warrior and the statesman to be called upon to study these trivial details, of which so many have been stored up for us. Supposing that all that we had to narrate of Maitland's private life was that he was skilled in water-colour drawing, or admired the music of Paesiello, or kept canaries; how would the recital of these blameless diversions help us to realise the man who ruled the Ionian Islands and Malta together? As a matter of fact, Maitland was exceptionally devoid of resources. Of him more than of most men we can say that the man's work was the man, and his work was monumental. More of it has survived than befell with some other adminstrators. Of his three great tasks, Ceylon, Malta and the Ionian Islands, Ceylon and Malta remain to testify to his capacity; the Ionian Islands have passed away into other hands. But when he died, and for forty years after, they were still English; and Maitland must have felt that his life had borne abundant fruit. Wherever he had served he had been the right man in the right place. He was the very man to hew a colony into shape; and to achieve that end with the least possible friction and in the shortest possible space of time. The most violent attack on his policy in Ceylon was made by De Quincey in

his famous essay on the fall of Kandy. But it was implied rather than expressed; and of course De Quincey had no means of knowing the compulsion under which Maitland sacrificed everything to what he denounced as the 'very lunacies of retrenchment.' De Quincey could not know that the Malays were confessed traitors, the other coloured troops lukewarm in our interest, and the white forces totally inadequate to defend the island; to say nothing of being continually called in to play nursemaid to the government of Madras. If he had known all this, he would not have blamed Maitland's inertia in the face of the atrocities that made Kandy a fouler and bloodier Kumási. In point of fact, there has been no greater piece of pure adminstrative work than Maitland's government of Ceylon.

His work in Malta was less remarkable, but we have been recently reminded how difficult the Maltese population is to handle in the face of a serious epidemic, and we are so far well equipped for appreciating the ease with which Maitland dealt with that panic-stricken state of mind.

The question of the Ionian Islands was made from the outset, and perhaps designedly made, a question of the extremest complexity. Nobody would have been surprised or alarmed if England had annexed them; but to call them independent when they obviously were nothing of the kind, to call them English when (from a diplomatic point of view) they

were not English, was to lay up for ourselves and for the Ionians certain disaster. It was evidently a source of the utmost mortification to the Capodistrian party that (thanks to the genius of Maitland) we got out of our immediate difficulties as well as we did. Our failure was prophesied from the outset, and it was hoped that our failure would be complete and immediate. Instead, we achieved a most remarkable success. It was common to attribute our eventual failure to our 'unsympathetic' and 'unconciliatory' dealings with the Ionians. But an examination of the dreary history of the protectorate shows us that this mental attitude is made up of a fondness for vague phrases, and an admiration (real or professed) for all qualities not English, and has very little basis in reason. The Ionians, like many other subject or quasi-subject races, had no particular desire for our sympathy. For the most part they looked on us as decidedly their inferiors. However much they might orate against us, they had no rooted objection to our presence, and rather mocked at the talk about 'sympathy.' 'Either govern us or go away,' the most intelligent of them were accustomed to say.

What was required for Maitland's work to be preserved was a succession of Maitlands. An ideal successor to Sir Thomas Maitland would have been Sir Stamford Raffles. Raffles was possessed of all Maitland's courage, sagacity and insatiable power of work; and he possessed, in addition, the tastes and

manners of an accomplished gentleman. In the appointment that was actually made, we see foreshadowed the whole history of our failure. For Malta a man of first-rate capacity was chosen—the Marquis of Hastings. So important was Malta felt to be that Hastings, who had just retired from a ten years' term of office as Governor-General of India, evidently thought the island government no derogation from his dignity. But for the Ionian Islands no more considerable person was selected than Sir Frederick Adam, Maitland's understudy. This was an appointment that could not have been made if the impression that anybody would do for Corfu had not been general. Now and then, during Maitland's absence in Malta, Adam had been called upon to act on his own initiative. He had the courage to act; but he always acted wrongly. He was a man of second-rate capacity; and Corfu was a post that called for a man of first-rate capacity, and provided even such a man with more work than was good for him. There is very little doubt that the work killed Maitland; it would have killed most men years before.

The Ionian Islands required unremitting attention both from the Lord High Commissioner and the Colonial Office. The apparent stability that Maitland had so wonderfully brought about deceived all the Lord High Commissioners into the belief that they had nothing more serious to do than to attend

to the routine of established administration. As for the Colonial Office, England was just entering on the long dead period during which it was the fashion to decry the colonies. Far from the Colonial Office being thought to be of any importance, or from it being held desirable that the office should be watchful over colonial interests, it was tacitly and often explicitly maintained that the sooner there were no colonies the better. Meanwhile, and awaiting its inevitable and desirable extinction, the Colonial Office could not do better than keep itself quiet, and, above all, avoid taking things seriously. Now, the one point of Europe which for the next forty years demanded daily and hourly to be taken seriously was the Ionian Islands. Not because it was the meeting point of such mighty interests as, for example, Florence or Frankfurt, but because of the unexampled complexity of the conditions under which its government was maintained. '*Laissez aller*' was the worst imaginable policy for them, and '*laissez aller*' was daily cried up as the only possible policy—the policy at once righteous, wise and profitable. So the day came when the Islands were surrendered to Greece, and surrendered in such a fashion that we gave the impression of having been expelled. Our retirement marked the lowest point of England's influence in Europe and the world. At the beginning of the century England ruled the sea; at the end she seems to have climbed part of the way back to that dominant

position. During the middle of the century she seemed incapable and undesirous of doing more than rule herself and the Isle of Wight; for our retirement from Corfu was generally understood to mean much more than the surrender of an agreeable winter resort for people of leisure: it was the open and definite renunciation of the mastery of the Mediterranean.

A very short examination of the history of the growth of British influence in the Mediterranean has already been attempted above. The only point that it is necessary to notice here is that Sir Thomas Maitland's governorship coincides with the only period during which England actually held the mastery of the Mediterranean. This was not merely the result of his appointment at the moment when France was exhausted by the Napoleonic wars, and when no other nations were present in force to dispute our supremacy. These were, no doubt, the circumstances under which he took up his duties. The most inconsiderable man would at such a time have been for a few years a conspicuous figure. But nothing like the mastery of the Mediterranean would have resulted from his measures.

Maitland was a statesman, and the only Mediterranean statesman that England ever produced. There have been Indian and Canadian and African statesmen not a few. But only for a brief period was England in a commanding position in the Mediterranean, and during that brief period her interests were watched

and guided by Thomas Maitland. He not only managed his double charge; he held it in the hollow of his hand. With his superfluous leisure and energy, he mastered every Mediterranean question that could directly or indirectly concern the interests of England. He knew the Barbary States, and all their persons and politics, by heart. He managed them to perfection; now cajoling, now menacing, but always politely; and supplementing, by the mere leavings of his own energy, the feeble fumblings of the consulates.

As regarded the Porte, he was favourably placed; for he had known Liston, our ambassador, for twenty years, and understood exactly how to take him. The extremely distasteful business of Parga he carried through in person; thereby gaining, from personal observation, an invaluable knowledge of the affairs of the mainland. As for Italy, he was at home in its politics from the beginning. He frequently visited the baths of Lucca, and his valetudinarianism was a constant subject of scoffing among his enemies. But at Lucca he met all the considerable people of the Peninsula; and in his situation, knowledge of people was everything. Many a man would have been disturbed by the alarming views that Lord William Bentinck was continually putting forward about the condition, now of Sicily, now of Genoa, now of the mainland. But Maitland had known Bentinck in India, and knew him for a well-meaning, blundering

man who would always be in some difficulty. So he was quite undisturbed by his outcries.

He had, of course, much to do with the court of Rome. Another man would have conducted his business with the Papal See by correspondence. But Maitland betook himself to Rome, and personally directed it; not only because he was well aware of the essential importance of religious matters, but because he lost no opportunities of knowing men as they were rather than as they appeared on paper. So in the long list of his personal acquaintances the name of Cardinal Gonsalvi, the Papal Secretary of State, is one of the most important. It was no doubt largely owing to Sir Frederick Adam's extensive local knowledge that he was selected as Maitland's successor. But it is one thing to have knowledge, and another to know how to use it.

If we regard the history of the English in the Mediterranean as beginning with the year 1661, we find that when it had lasted one hundred and fifty years the first and only Mediterranean statesman arose. Other men had had particular pieces of work appointed them to do, and they had acquitted themselves more or less creditably. No connected policy had inspired their instructions, or was served by their efforts. We drifted backwards and forwards, torn between the impulse of the people and the reluctance of the Cabinet. To Maitland alone, in whose day those two impulses acted in the same

direction, was confided the duty of definitely securing the mastery of the Mediterranean to England. He secured it as firmly as the rock to which Napier compared his own character. When we lost it, there was the usual sage comments about the 'inevitable,' the 'natural,' and so on. Yet it is not so astonishing that we should have retired as it is that Maitland's work should have endured so long. After Maitland, nothing was added to the fabric of the Ionian government. But it took forty years of the wash of sentiment, forty years of the open assaults of enemies, forty years of the acid dribble of intrigue to wear away his work.

Whether or not the Ionian Islands were a loss to the British Empire is a question for military and naval experts. But a civilian may offer the obvious comment that, in the hands of a power which (whatever its virtues) is not likely to become a first-rate power from either a military or naval point of view, they can hardly be considered as a great danger. Moreover, since no one power is to have the mastery of the water-way, there is something to be said for the view that the more Mediterranean powers there are the better.

Since Maitland's day we have advanced a good deal further. But the influence of other powers has grown much more rapidly than our own. Our indirect influence has, however, increased prodigiously, and has increased in directions that could never have

been foretold in Maitland's day. The Mediterranean question is still, for England, a burning question of foreign politics, as it has been any time since the year 1661. But although the Ionian Islands have sunk into complete obscurity, and the whole Mediterranean outlook has grown so much wider that the Adriatic has become a mere backwater, we can perhaps afford an hour to studying what it was that Maitland created, and how his creation was destroyed. There are still the two parties among us: those who angrily resent the idea of our withdrawal, and those who as angrily resent our presence in that quarter. To one of these parties the name of 'King Tom' will always be *anathema maranatha;* but the rest of us will say, may England never want for Maitlands at a pinch.

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